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BY EUGENE SUE

AUTHOR OF

"THE WANDERING JEW," "MYSTERIES OF PARIS." ETC, ETC.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

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1849.

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PREFACE BY THE TRANSLATOR.

THE original of the present translation, though it is ranked by his countrymen, among the most successful efforts of the imagination of its celebrated author, has never yet been presented before the English public, in an English dress.

Yet there are few works of imagination, in the literature of the present day, which comprise more objects of attraction, to the sympathies and to the traditions of the English public.

This striking and most picturesque narrative, of the supreme struggle of Protestant liberty of conscience in France, in the despotic era of the Bourbon dynasty, must ever possess a durable and vivid

interest in the country so illustrious for its truly Christian hospitality to those numerous emigrants whose industry, and whose exemplary morality, found a refuge on these shores, from the persecutions of that Louis, misnamed the Great, in that country whose resources, by a just retribution of Providence, acquired so valuable an addition, from those heroic exiles to whom she afforded her generous protection.

In a more general point of view, these volumes will be found to offer the most true and powerful delineation of the fearful effects of religious bigotry and intolerance, not only in the prodigies of cruelty and violence, to which those evil spirits could impel their votaries, even in an age, and in a country, which gloried in its own peculiar refinement and enlightenment, but also in the appalling excesses of fanaticism and of retaliatory vengeance, which, in all ages and in all countries, they have evoked by the fatal reaction of their own enormities upon their victims.

In the words of one who bore no undistinguished part, in the terrible events which form the basis of this narrative, "it may not perhaps be unnecessary, in this place, to observe, that the story of the following book, is not the only melancholy one, of a great many wherein the people of the Cevennes have been found struggling, with bigotry, superstition,

and persecution. They are part of the descendents of the Albigenses and Waldenses so famous for their opposition to the errors and corruptions of Popery long before the Reformation of Luther and Calvin. They boast to have been never reformed, but to have had the same doctrine and worship, since the time of the Apostles. And indeed there are a great many circumstances that render this exceedingly probable. They can be traced back to the very darkest ages of Popery; and were grown so formidable about the eleventh and twelfth centuries, as to bring upon themselves a Crusade, as a set of dangerous and incorrigible wretches that threatened destruction to the Great Diana of the Ephesians, and unless timely suppressed, would put an end to the gainful trade of her silversmiths. Pope Innocent the Third, was the author of this pious expedition, and Simon de Montfort his General, who out of his great zeal for the propagation of his Faith, is said to have massacred no less than two hundred thousand of these unhappy people, making the glory of the Creator, a pretence for the extirpation of his creatures, and destroying the living images of God to set up the idolatrous shrines of his pretended Saints."*

* Preface to the Memoirs of the Wars of the Cevennes under Colonel Cavalier. London 1726.

In reading the following scenes from the last conflict, which took place upon this secular battle-ground of the liberty of conscience, it is impossible not to be struck at the many points of similarity which that conflict presents to one of the most disgraceful episodes of our own annals—the persecution of the Covenanted Church of Scotland.

In both cases the persecution was directed by monarchs who, while they deluged their realm with the blood of their subjects, and revived the cruelties of the Cæsars in their judicial punishments, for purposes, asserted, by themselves at least, to be religious, lived in open and scandalous self-abandonment to those vices which are the idols of the impious and the profligate.

In both cases the loyalty of the persecuted had been frequently tried and acknowledged by the persecutor. The exertions of the Presbyterian party in the cause of Charles the Second, the carnage of Dunbar and of Worcester, and the prolonged military occupation of Scotland by the Protector need not be recapitulated here: not less remarkable was the zeal displayed by the Protestants of France, throughout the long and disastrous minority of Louis the Fourteenth. We find it acknowledged by that monarch himself in a letter written to the Elector of Brandenburg, after the persecutions had already commenced. These are his words:—"I have

entered into an engagement with them upon my royal word, and this engagement is the rule which I prescribe to myself, both for justice sake, and to shew my sense of their obedience, and their zeal since the pacification of 1629, and the gratitude which I bear for their fidelity on the last occasion that they took up arms in my cause, and opposed, with force and energy, the evil designs which a rebellious party had formed in my states, against my authority."

The fruits of the gratitude of the House of Stuart to the Presbyterians of Scotland, are well known; those of the gratitude, to the Protestants of France, of Louis the XIV., in the subserviency of his sinful old age to the suggestions of the Jesuitical party, headed by his confessor, the Pere La Chaise, have been summed up with much force and terseness in the following words of a modern French author of celebrity.

"The effect of these successive ordinances was that social and religious persecution seized upon the Protestant in his cradle, and never left him till his grave.

"As a boy, he possessed no longer a place of education.

"As a youth, no career was open to him, since he could neither be a steward, nor a mercer, nor

an apothecary, nor a physician, nor a lawyer, nor a consul.

"As a man, he had no church in which to worship, no registry, in which to record his marriage, or the birth of his children; his liberty of conscience was invaded at every moment; if he sang a hymn in his own house, a procession passed, and he was compelled to be silent; a Catholic ceremony took place, he was obliged to swallow his resentment, and to allow the outside of his house to be hung with tapestry, as a sign of joy; he has inherited some fortune from his ancestors, this fortune which he cannot keep, for want of a social position and of civil rights, escapes little by little from his hands and goes to endow the colleges and hospitals of his enemies.

"In his old age, his very death-bed is embittered, for if he dies in the faith of his fathers, he may not sleep by their side, and with the exception of a number limited to ten, his friends are not allowed to follow his funeral, which must take place at night and in concealment like that of a Pariah.

"Finally, at whatever period of his life, if he seeks to fly that unnatural mother country, in which he can neither be born, nor live, nor die—he will be declared a rebel, his goods will be confiscated, and the least punishment that awaits him, if ever he falls again into the hands of his persecutors, will be to

pass the rest of his life in the king's galleys rowing with an assassin on one side of him, and a forger on the other." *

Dreadful as this picture appears, it will be seen by the perusal of these volumes, that it omits many of the most revolting features of the persecution which the protestants of France endured, under the Ordinances of Louis the XIV. His perils ceased not at the *grave*.

In France as in Scotland, the chosen agents of religious tyranny, were the most debauched and the most notoriously unprincipled of the court followers, supported by ferocious mercenaries, soul-hardened in the barbarian warfare of the semi-civilized countries of Europe, and the savage mountaineers of the remotest confines of the realm.

In both cases the sufferers composed the most religious, the most industrious, the most frugal and the most primitive population of the State.

In both cases, as the corruption of the best, is proverbially the worst, and as "the beginning of strife is as when one letteth out waters," these noble qualities, which had been so ungratefully appreciated by the rulers, were too frequently, if not swept away, at least momentarily submerged by the darkest torrent of gloomy fanaticism and merciless revenge.

* Life of John Cavalier. By A. Dumas.

The Scottish Covenanter, driven from the face of man, to the heath-clad mountain, to the pathless moss, and to the black crag overhanging the misty waterfall, where his lurking place is yet pointed out by the finger of rude tradition, under the continual excitement of the deep sense of deep wrong, of the ardours of religious enthusiasm, and of the influence of those solemn and majestic scenes, in whose wild solitudes, he dwelt so long alone with his own mystic, and troubled thoughts, fashioned forth at length from those lonely and stern imaginings, the Faith that the promises, the privileges and the miracles of the old Covenant, had been renewed for the faithful members of his own persecuted sect. He beheld direct manifestations of this new dispensation, in every event, and in every operation of Nature, in the sudden mist which sheltered him from the pursuit of Claverhouse, as well as in the fatality which delivered the Archbishop of Saint Andrews into the hands of his murderers. He beheld them, even in the assistance granted by the evil spirit to his most redoubted persecutors, in the demon-steed of Claverhouse and the bullets which he believed to have bounded like hailstones from Dalziel's buffcoat on the dark day of the Rullion-green.

But with the promises he believed also that the stern duties of the Chosen People of the Lord had de-

volved upon his sect. In the eyes of its wilder maintainers all without the pale of the new Covenant was Edon, Babylon, and Moab. The sole mission of the believer on earth, was to achieve not merely the liberty, but the absolute and despotic ascendancy of his own religious views. To the rigid satisfaction of this duty, the laws of honor and of humanity, the obligations of political allegiance or social relations, were alike subordinate. The disciples of this new Evangel, were equally bound, and equally prepared to become its sanguinary Apostles, or its meek and heroic martyrs.

Inde ruendi
In ferrum mens prona viris, animæque capaces
Mortis, et ignarum redituræ parcere vitæ.

Hence the annihilation of *self*, which enabled them to support either character, with a constancy, which never wavered, and a noble simplicity of faith for whose fearful misdirection, the rulers of those days must render a terrible account.

Such was the effect of Religious persecution in the best educated portion of even our own Empire, at no very distant date. And one of the most illustrious children of that sister country, has recorded his opinion that—" had the system of coercion against the Presbyterians been continued until our day, Hume and Robertson would have preached in the

wilderness, and only discovered their powers of eloquence and composition, by rolling along a deeper torrent of gloomy fanaticism."*

Upon such considerations, we need little wonder that the same causes should have produced the same effects, whether on the Eildon hills or amidst the chesnut forests and the volcanic mountains of the Cevennes, on the Magus Muir, or within the Abbey of Pont de Mont Verd. We need not wonder that in both countries a holy cause was too often sullied by superstition and profanation, that a just cause was not unstained by deeds of cruelty and blood. These, we repeat, have ranked and ever will rank among the remoter consequences of religious persecution and number not among the least aggravations of the crimes of tyrants.

In both cases the long deferred insurrection commenced by the murder of an eminent and obnoxious ecclesiastic; in both it was crowned, at first with an almost miraculous success, in both it failed ultimately through internal dissension, and the fanatical insubordination of the more violent party.

When such points of similarity exist in history, we need scarcely wonder at the many points of similarity between this work and that which is perhaps the greatest of Sir Walter Scott. Need we say that we allude to 'Old Mortality'?

* Sir W. Scott's Minstrelsy of the Border.

Yet in this resemblance there is neither servility nor plagiarism. We derive from it that striking and instructive effect which results from the contemplation of two masterpieces composed by two great painters in widely different styles on the same imposing subject.

Thus between the characters and conduct of the heroes of these two novels, Morton and Cavalier, there is indeed a very wide distinction. But from the circumstances in which they are both placed, and the intestine struggles between the moderates and the enthusiasts, in which they are both forced to maintain the same perilous and thankless part, there results that general resemblance to which we have alluded. We may add that even the weaknesses which are (somewhat harshly and arbitrarily) attributed by M. Sue, to the character of Cavalier, attach more interest to this narrative than is infused into the story of Sir Walter Scott, by the character of his pattern hero.

The ferocious Dalziel, with his beard unshaven, since the death of Charles the first, his Russian wars, his obsolete dress, and his merciless brutality, finds in every characteristic, a worthy rival in Captain Paul, the savage leader of the Miquelets.

The dark and sanguinary fanaticism of Balfour of Burley is not more vividly and more terribly depicted in Old Mortality, than the corresponding

character of Ephraim, the grim Forester of the Aygoal. Yet there are certain features of the widest dissimilarity between these two characters, and it may be doubted whether even the genius of Sir W. Scott has created a character of better imagined and more sustained consistency, of a wilder and more terrific grandeur than the *Ephraim* of M. Sue. It stands alone, sinister, and monumental, as those huge, grey stones in the wilderness whose base was watered by our own ancestors with the blood of human sacrifice.

It is not our purpose to point out the many analogies which exist between these two great productions, but to instance a few from a very numerous class, in order to attract the attention of the English reader to a feature which will not fail to impart much additional pleasure in the perusal of the present work. If the subject and the characters which it comprises, suggest a comparison with Old Mortality, its studied and artful intermixture of the ludicrous with the terrible bear a still stronger resemblance to the Bride of Lammermoor.

This is however neither a necessary nor a fitting opportunity to dwell on the many beauties of this work which will tend, if we mistake not, even in the imperfect dress supplied by the labour of the translator to elevate the reputation of its author as a novelist to a height which even his better known, though sometimes unfortunately less unexceptionable produc-

tions, have obtained for him in the estimation of the British public.

But, as a minute knowlege of the events of foreign history is less general among us at the present moment than many matters of more abstruse and less interesting knowlege, it may perhaps be agreeable to the reader to learn how far the characters introduced in this novel are historical.

It is a singular proof of the caprices of human fame that it may possibly be necessary to inform the great majority of our readers that the hero of this work is an historical character. Yet he was one whose name at one period filled all Europe, and who has left enough on record to prove that he was of that stamp of men from whom the Almighty raises up at His own good time the scourges or the deliverers of a world. It would indeed have been strange if the opinion of his own times had been unanimous in its estimate of the motives and actions of such a character. M. Sue, probably from feelings which are not without excuse in a French bosom, from circumstances which it would be injudicious to anticipate, has taken throughout this work the most unfavorable view of the good faith and moral principle of Cavalier, though he has done full justice to his extraordinary talents. The circumstances of his birth and education are correctly stated in the body of the work, and further information will be found in the notes which accompany it.

The character of the Marechal de Villars, whose defeat at Malplaquet was the crowning wreath of the laurels of our own Marlborough, is too well known to need a comment.

Captain Paul and the Abbe de Chayla were unhappily for their own times but too real personages. The whole of the circumstances relative to the early life, the missions, the sufferings, the persecutions, and intermittent fits of remorse of the Abbe de Chayla are strictly historical. But the execrable cruelties of which this man was the ruthless inflictor and even it is said, the inventor, are related with far greater minuteness in authentic works, than they will be found embodied in this story.

The character of Ephraim, is a personification of that party, among the Camisards, who correspond to the party of Burley and Macbriar among the Covenanters. But his original may be found in an authentic hero of the insurrection—Henri Castanet of Mossavagnes "a keeper of the mountain of the Aygoal whose address was so well known that he was said never to miss a shot." The circumstances of his death, will be noticed elsewhere.

The fair Isabelle was a real character, but one whose reputation, as we shall shew hereafter, is much indebted to the imagination of M. Sue. The Marquis of Florac is also a real character.

Toinon la Psyche and the whole story of the influ-

ence of her personal charms on the events referred to in this work are wholly imaginary.

The imprisonment of Cavalier's father during the insurrection is historical, but the compassionate will rejoice to learn that there is no authentic record of the existence or sufferings of Celeste and Gabriel. A younger brother of Cavalier, aged only ten years served under him throughout the war and distinguished himself by the remarkable action which is thus narrated by Dumas in his account of the terrible battle fought at Nage between Cavalier and the Marechal de Montrevel.

"Cavalier divided his troops into two bodies. One under Ravanel and Catinat was ordered to force the bridge, while he himself protected the retreat at the head of the other. He then turned like a boar at bay and made head against the enemy.

"Suddenly he heard loud cries behind him. The bridge is forced. But instead of keeping it to secure the passage of their chief, the Camisards dispersed themselves in the plain and take to flight. Then a child threw himself before them, and stopped them, holding a pistol to their heads.

"This was the little brother of Cavalier; mounted on one of those little wild horses of the Camargue, the remains of that Arab race brought by the Moors of Spain to Languedoc, armed with a sabre and a carbine proportioned to his size, the child stopped

these runaways. "Where are you going?" he cried. "Instead of running away like cowards, line the river, keep the enemy in check, and assist my brother's retreat.

"Ashamed to deserve such reproaches, the Camisards halted, rallied, lined the river, and by a well sustained fire covered the retreat of Cavalier, who gained the bridge and crossed it without receiving a single wound, though his horse was covered with wounds, and he was obliged to change his sabre three times."

It would far exceed the limits of this preface and tend to destroy the interest of the narrative if we were to proceed to show how far its events are strictly in accordance with history. We will therefore refer the reader for further illustration the to notes.

It remains only to be said by the translator that while he regrets that the talented author of this novel should have so little pretention to the glory of him who left

No line which dying he could wish to blot.

—he is induced to lay this translation before the public by the firm belief, that the original will be found wholly free from those exceptions which may be justly taken to some of the other works of the same author.

He considers on the contrary that the tendency of this work will be found beneficial in every

moral, social, and religious view. And at the present moment, in these days of fearful interest, he thinks that it will hardly be deemed unseasonable to direct attention to one of the truest and therefore most appalling pictures of civil war, which is there indeed clothed with all its horrors, when the secular animosity of religious differences bears its own infernal and horrible contributions to the aggravation and the eternization of the contest.

May the Almighty in his infinite mercies preserve this realm from the guilt of such as could seek to attempt the realization of that fearful picture! And may that realm be ever mindful of the gratitude which she owes to the Infinite Disposer of Events, for the mercies which it has pleased Him to extend to her at a period when the political and social fabrics of so many less favored states seem to heave around her, with the throes of anarchic and violent dissolution.

"Praise the Lord, O Jerusalem. Praise thy God, O Zion. For he hath strengthened the bars of thy gates, he hath blessed thy children within thee!"

London, 13*th. April* 1849.

THE

PROTESTANT LEADER.

BOOK I.

THE ARCH PRIEST OF THE CEVENNES.

CHAPTER I.

THE LITTLE CANAAN.

Not far from the town of St. Andeol of Clerguemont, situated in the Lower Cevennes, on the eastern confines of the diocese of Mende in Languedoc, (now called the department de la Lozere) extended a considerable plain, sheltered from the icy blasts of the north and the moist breezes of the west by the woody slopes of the Aygoal, one of the highest mountains of the chain of the Cevennes.

This valley, bathed towards the east by the Gardon d'Anduze, and exposed to the vivifying heat of the south, was of such a fertility, that it was called in the dialect of the country the Hort-Diou, (the Garden of God). The Protestants, who formed the great majority of the inhabitants of this diocese, had long since given to the Hort-Diou the scriptural name of Little Canaan.

The waters of the Gardon, rapid and limpid, but neither broad nor deep, after having, in their numerous windings, watered this delightful plain, disappeared under the shadowy aisles of a secular forest.

Undermined by the force of the current, bowed under the weight of their summits, some huge oaks, half-fallen, had only been propped up by the trees which grew upon the opposite bank; so that some of these oaks, still leafy and living, appeared so many bridges of verdure cast from one bank to another.

Willows sent forth in every direction shoots so vigorous, that their green branches sometimes became interwoven in the midst of the river, whose impeded current formed then a sort of cascade, as it surmounted these bars of foliage.

Here and there a thick carpet of moss hid the gnarled trunks, and mingled its velvet hues with the many-coloured pebbles, over which the Gardon rolled its azure waves; thousands of birds made these green solitudes ring with their warblings; the only sound heard in the distance, from the plain of the Hort-Diou, was the melancholy tinkle of the bells, which the rams that led the flocks carried proudly on their necks.

In a lovely evening of the month of June, 1702, a girl and a boy were seated on the bank of the river, under a little grotto of verdure, formed by branches of willow, intermixed with ivy and with flowering hawthorn.

A large clearing through the skirt of the wood, gave a distant view of part of Little Canaan.

Scattered over the valley, a multitude of sheep browzed on a green and tufted herbage.

These pastures swelled with a gentle ascent, to the brow of a hill, formed by one of the last undulations of Mount Aygoal. A dark forest bounded the horizon, from its depth arose, sad and lonely, the high tower of the Chateau of Mas-Arribas.

Gabriel Cavalier, the eldest of the youthful

pair of whom we have spoken, was a little herdsman of about fourteen years of age. A leathern belt pressed to his shape his frock of coarse white canvass, the ordinary dress of the peasant of the Cevennes. Near him lay his knapsack, his broad-brimmed straw hat, his iron-shod crook, some fishing-lines and hooks, and a basket containing several fine trout caught in the Gardon.

His features, of an extraordinary beauty, had a sweet and pensive expression, his long hair was fair and curled, his eyes blue, his skin brown and tanned with the keen air of the mountains.

A little girl, twelve or thirteen years of age, dressed in a long gown of white material, was seated beside Gabriel. She had one of her arms thrown round the neck of the little herdsman. She resembled him so much, though her features were more delicate, her skin more clear, and her hair more silken, that she was easily recognised as his sister.

Celeste and Gabriel had sportively crowned their young heads with violets and wild jonquils, and were now bathing their finely-formed and naked feet in the fresh and limpid current of the river, whose pellucid waters circled

in silvery folds around limbs, which in form and whiteness resembled a model from the antique.

Not far from this charming group, a pet dove, white as snow, smoothed down, with the end of her rosy beak, her still moist plumage.

The two children appeared pensive and melancholy. They did not speak to one another. They seemed absorbed in simple and profound contemplation of the delicious landscape, which unfolded itself before their eyes.

"What are you thinking of sister?" said Gabriel at length, casting a tender look on Celeste.

"I am thinking of the meeting of the young Tobias with the angel Raphael. When shall we also meet an angel who will give us the secret how to cure our mother's mother," added Celeste with a sigh.

"And I, sister," said Gabriel, "was thinking of the joy of Joseph when he found his brother Benjamin whom he loved so much, and whom he thought lost."

From these words, we may judge of the temperament and education of these two little Cevennese.

Every evening they heard the Bible read to their family, according to Protestant custom. They passed long hours in this solitude, a veritable promised land. Bred in the heart of a mountain country, where the grander spectacles of nature are so frequent, they practised the simple and pure life of the primitive races of humanity, and found a striking resemblance between the serene and imposing physiognomy of their parents, and that which the sacred books gave to the patriarchs. In a word, these children, their imagination filled with the miraculous records, and the pastoral poetry of the Bible, believed that times were not changed, and daily expected to behold, appearing from amidst empurpled clouds, some radiant Archangel, with wings of azure and a glory around his head.

Meek, delicate, and timid, Gabriel loved not the sports of his companions, more robust than himself. To the exercise of racing or wrestling, he preferred the walk or the reverie in the shadow of the wood; peaceful amusements which he shared always with his sister.

The sun began to sink slowly behind the black forest of pine and chesnut trees which

crowned the mountain, when the two children heard, in the distance, the barking of several dogs.

"They are the dogs of the Forest-keeper of Aygoal!" said Celeste, drawing nearer to her brother in her terror.

Suddenly the children turned pale.

An enormous wolf appeared on the ridge of the hill where their flock was grazing; he limped hard, and seemed severely wounded.

Immediately the terrified sheep fled in the direction of the river, and two big, grizzle-coloured sheep dogs which watched them, with bristling hair and tails clapped to their bellies, shared the terrors of their charge and followed, instead of preparing to defend it.

Celeste and Gabriel, putting their arms round one another, clung together with fright. They remained motionless, with fixed eyes and half opened lips.

At this moment the cry of the dogs was heard approaching, and two huge gazehounds followed on the trail of the wild beast, which (its back having been broken by a first shot) left a bloody track behind him, and followed the ridge of the hill limping.

The wolf made a last effort to escape, but,

after having run swiftly for a few minutes, he fell exhausted. Still he gathered himself up, and, seated on his robust haunches, with open mouth, with red and flaming eyes, with snarling lips which showed his formidable teeth, he bravely awaited the dogs, uttering a hoarse and threatening howl.

Although they were distant from the field of battle, the two children were terrified; their flock crowded together, bleating, on the bank of the garden, and the two dogs of the little shepherds, overcome by the instinctive fear of their species at the approach of wolves, had swum over the river, and taken refuge, trembling with fear, at the feet of Celeste and Gabriel.

But on the contrary, the two dogs of the Forest-keeper, bold and trained to the attack, were about to throw themselves fearlessly on the wolf, when a sonorous voice, accompanied with the cracking of a whip, called out:

"Back, dogs, back. Here, Raab!* Here, Balak!"

At the same moment a horseman appeared over the crest of the hill.

* In Hebrew Raab signifies strong, Balak a destroyer.

It was the Religionist* Ephraim, the Forest-keeper of Aygoal.

He rode without saddle on one of the little horses of the Camargue, generally so full of strength and fire. This horse was completely black; its long waving tail, and the thick mane which fell over its eyes, gave it a savage look. Ephraim guided it with a rude bridle of cords, a piece of the root of the ash served for its bit. The costume of the Forest-keeper was not less strange than the harness of his steed.

Ephraim wore a sort of frock made of the skin of a wolf, not tanned, on which still appeared the reddish traces of the animal's veins. A leathern shoulder-belt supported his long-barrelled gun on his shoulders. An ox-horn, full of powder, a bag of goat-skin, containing his provisions, and a wooden-handled hunting-knife hung by his side, while a pair of drawers of coarse white cloth left uncovered his naked and muscular legs, tanned and sunburnt to a brick colour.

The features of Ephraim, stern, and energetic, were almost hid beneath his thick, black, and bristly beard. This beard came up even

* The French Protestants were then called indiscriminately Religionists, Calvinists, Fanatics, Huguenots.

to his eyes, and gave him so ferocious an appearance, that he was surnamed the Bear of Aygoal. His complexion was olive-coloured. A large strip of wolf-skin, going twice round his bare head, kept back from his forehead his long, vigorous and curling hair. His black eyes, deep-set in their orbits, shone with a sombre light. Of middle size, this man, now in the prime of life, possessed herculean proportions; his broad shoulders, slightly rounded, announced no common strength.

Ephraim inspired in the district a veneration mixed with fear. His courage, his austere manners, and his piety were equally well-known. Inhabiting a cabin situated in the heart of the forest, he lived in profound solitude; his speech was abrupt, bold, poetical, and almost always coloured with dark images borrowed from the Bible, his only and constant reading; his word possessed a wild authority over the herdsmen, and the wood-cutters of the mountains. These considered him a saint, and never approached him without a respectful terror.

At the sonorous voice of Ephraim, his dogs had stopped short a few paces off the wolf, at which they barked furiously. Ephraim over-

took them, and sprang off his horse, which, far from running away from its master, followed him with an appearance of intelligence.

The Keeper took his gun, cocked it, and resolutely approached the wolf, which, with a last bound, sought to spring upon him. But Ephraim holding his gun with one hand only, put the end of the barrel into the open mouth of the wild beast. He bit the iron with fury. The shot was fired and he fell.

"So perish the grievous wolves which spare not the flock!" cried out Ephraim, with a savage exultation. After having pronounced these scriptural words he brandished his gun with an air of menace.

The sun had completely set behind the forest of Aygoal.

Celeste and Gabriel, reassured by the death of the wolf, gathered together their flocks hastily in order to lead them to the town of Saint Andéol. The pet dove perched itself upon the shoulder of Celeste, and the brother and sister regained their father's farm.

They cast a last look of fear upon the hill already invaded by the shades of evening.

Ephraim, his horse and his dogs, grouped on the top of the mountain, placed in full relief

their own black profile against the doubtful and orange-tinted sky of twilight.

Seen from below, and at a distance, these figures appeared to the children of a frightful size.

The Keeper of Aygoal had his hands and dress dyed with blood; he had just disembowelled the wolf. Despite the ordinary repugnance of dogs to the flesh of this animal, his were so fierce and keen that they devoured it.

Strange to tell! his horse Lepidoth,* which he had accustomed, by a savage caprice, to eat raw flesh, his horse, with upcurled and quivering nostrils, greedily licked the blood which stained the herbage, and emitted savage neighings.

Then the Keeper called off Raab and Balak, who abandoned at his voice the half-devoured carcass of the wolf.

Followed by these two dogs, whose white coats were almost hidden by the blood which covered them, leaning upon the withers of Lepidoth, Ephraim pensively descended the farther side of the hill, and regained his solitary hut.

At the moment when Celeste and Gabriel

* Lepidoth, in Hebrew, lightning.

quitted the place, they were struck with a new fear. The highest tower of the Chateau Mas-Arribas which rose against the horizon, white as a ghost, cast out through one of its windows many jets of a red and intensely ardent light.

"Do you see, do you see, sister? The tower of the glass-maker casts out lightning!" said Gabriel, trembling, "they say that it is always a sign of misfortune."

"Let us get home, let us get home quickly, my brother," said Celeste.

And both quickened their steps in order to arrive at Saint Andéol before nightfall.

CHAPTER II.

THE FARM OF SAINT ANDEOL.

SAINT ANDEOL, placed half way up the hill, in a charming situation, commanded Little Canaan. Celeste and Gabriel soon entered, with their flock, the homestead of their father.

This farmer, by name Jerome Cavalier, one of the most respected inhabitants of St. Andéol, was a man of grave and simple habits, of a rigid character. Like all the Protestants, he governed his numerous family with a patriarchal authority.

During the civil wars of the past century, his father and his grandfather had fought for the maintenance of the rights of the Reformed Religion. Without blaming the acts of his ancestors, Jerome Cavalier would not have imitated them. He did not believe it lawful to

take up arms against one's king, even to maintain the Faith; herein he followed scrupulously the doctrine of the five Protestant sects,* which enjoined before everything "profound submission to the Sovereign, and which only offered to Christians, persecuted for Faith's sake, constancy in suffering, and martyrdom."

Jerome Cavalier exhorted his people to abstain from all armed resistance, but he exhorted them also to support with calm and resignation the most cruel torments rather than renounce the practice of their religion.

After the revocation of the Edict of Nantes, Louis the XIV. ordered all Protestant churches to be shut up, or destroyed, and denounced the penalty of death, or the galleys against every Huguenot found in a religious assembly or listening to a sermon. Jerome Cavalier, notwithstanding the terrible severity of these edicts, assisted at all the meetings which outlawed ministers then held in the woods or the mountains.

He did not deny to the King the power, or the right to massacre the unarmed Protestants who came to listen with devotion to the addresses

* Calvin, Zuinglius, Ecolampadius, Busner, and Ballinger.

of their Ministers, but he believed the Protestants free to allow themselves to be butchered without resistance, and to purchase by martyrdom the eternity promised to the faithful.

Jerome Cavalier disapproved of the conduct of a great number of the Religionists who, despite of the edicts, exiled themselves in order to exercise their religion freely in foreign lands. He considered voluntary expatriation a weakness and a tacit adhesion to the unjust decrees which invaded the liberty of conscience: "To live as an honest man and a faithful subject in my country and in my faith (he said) is my right, and it is only to Death that I will resign it."

Much respected, much loved in the township, he had always used his great influence to calm the spirits which fresh persecutions irritated daily more and more.

When his two youngest children, Celeste and Gabriel, brought back the flocks, Jerome Cavalier was seated on a stone bench beneath a huge chesnut tree which overshadowed the gate of his farmstead. The face of this old man, strongly marked and embrowned by field labour, had an expression at once mild, firm and serious. He was aged about fifty years. His

long grey hairs fell upon his shoulders. He wore a doublet and vest of brown *cadis**, made of the wool of his own sheep, and high gaiters of thick white canvass. By his side was his wife, dressed in a gown of black serge.

She held upon her knees a great leather sack full of money, from which Jerome Cavalier drew from time to time, for this day was a Saturday, and, according to the custom of the country, the farmer was giving to each labourer his week's pay.

His servants all belonged to the Reformed Religion. Whether the presence of their master kept them in awe, or their habits were generally reserved, they had a thoughtful, almost a mournful air.

Agile, and vigorous like most mountaineers, their looks betrayed a cold but energetic resolution. Dressed in their long white frocks, their feet naked, or shod with sandals fastened with thongs, their heads respectfully uncovered, they held in their hands their felt hats, and passed one by one before the farmer to receive the money which he distributed amongst them,

* Cadis, a sort of cloth manufactured in Languedoc.

addressing to them some questions or some advice concerning the labours of the season.

A woman of very advanced years, whose venerable features appeared changed by suffering, was seated in an arm-chair without the farm; she contemplated, with a sort of pleasing sadness the last rays of the day so calm.

When the labourers had been paid, Madame Jerome Cavalier approached this aged woman, and said to her with lively solicitude, "How do you find yourself, my mother?"

"Still very weak my daughter, but this fine day revives me a little." Then she added, "Where are my grand children? I want them there close to me."

Soon, called by their mother, Celeste and Gabriel came and seated themselves at the feet of the grandmother who tenderly caressed with her trembling hands those lovely little bright-haired heads.

Jerome Cavalier, standing near his wife, who leant upon his arm, beheld this picture with a smile. A maid, dressed like her mistress in black, announced to the farmer that supper was ready.

At this period, the Protestants observed, scrupulously, community in their family meals.

The old man, aided by Gabriel, gently transported the arm-chair of the grandmother into the interior of the house; the labourers followed their employers.

The farm kitchen served as the dining-room of this family.

The supper served in wooden plates, on a coarse but very white table cloth, consisted of roast kid and mutton, boiled vegetables, trouts caught in the Gardon, a sheep-milk cheese and a basket of wild mulberries.

The scarcity of bread stuffs in this country was, in those times, such that the Farmer and his family alone eat an indifferent sort of barley bread; the labourers and the servants mixed with their food the pulp of boiled chesnuts.

Finally, master and servant drank spring water cooled in great pitchers of a porous earth, wine being looked upon as a superfluity and reserved to celebrate some family feasts, and to do honor to hospitality.

At the head of the table an arm-chair of oak marked the place of the Farmer. When he arrived at his seat, all placed themselves before their own; Jerome Cavalier was about to ask a blessing when he perceived that the first place on his right hand was vacant.

"Where is my eldest son?" he demanded of his wife.

She made a sign to a maid, who went forth and returned soon, saying, "Here is Mr. John."

Hardly had the new comer entered and placed himself at the right hand of the Farmer, before he said grace, after however observing:

"My son ought not to have allowed himself to be waited for in this manner."

The meal then commenced in a profound silence.

John Cavalier, the eldest son of the Farmer, was twenty years of age. He strongly resembled his brother Gabriel and his sister Celeste. Like them he was fair and had blue eyes; upon his cheeks, of a perfect oval, appeared the first down of a beard; his regular physiognomy was lively, bold, and expressive; his figure, though of the middle size, wanted neither strength nor elegance.

Though he was dressed, like his father, in brown cadis cloth, a sort of refinement was apparent in his attire. Two buttons of worked silver, and a fine bow of green riband secured the collar of his shirt of the finest linen; his high buff gaiters showed the outline of a mus-

cular and well turned leg; finally his broad grey felt, which he threw down on a stool at his entrance, was ornamented with a rich silver buckle and a riband like that which fastened the collar of his shirt.

These slight modifications of the habitual severity of the Protestant costume were not to the taste of the Farmer who pressed his brows with a look of displeasure.

At that time, in the families of the Religionists, there reigned such a subordination, and such a domestic deference that the repast already silent became even sad when every one remarked the ill-humour of the old man.

Of a resolute and jovial character, John Cavalier alone, whether he had not remarked the expression of his father's countenance, or did not attach much weight to the temporary coldness which he manifested in his regard, sought to enliven the meal, despite the suppliant looks of his mother, who was pained to see him engage in this attempt.

"Have you made a good day's fishing to-day, my little Gabriel?" he asked his young brother.

"Yes, brother, I have taken five trout in the Gardon; but we had a great fright, Celeste and I, for we saw the tower of the glass-maker

shooting out a blood-red fire; they say that this always announces some misfortune."

"Decidedly, the old Du Serre, gentleman glassblower as he is, passes for a sorcerer, (said Cavalier gaily) though he is the best creature in the world, is he not, father?"

"I believe M. Du Serre a good Calvinist and an honest man, you know it," said the Farmer, simply.

"And what else have you seen very frightful, my little Gabriel?" pursued Cavalier.

"We saw the Keeper of Aygoal kill a wolf."

"Oh! the hand of Ephraim is as sure as his eye, (said John Cavalier), I have seen him at fifty paces cut off, with his long musket, a nut tree bough hardly as thick as my finger. It is a pity that instead of having the mien of a gay forester, he looks as fierce as the animal whose name he bears," he added, laughing.

This jest appeared unseemly to his father, who said to him with a severe look as if to allude to his own studied toilet.

"If Ephraim dresses himself in the skins of the wild beasts which he kills, it is because he despises the idle vanities of the world; if he inhabits the depths of forests, it is because

solitude is favourable to prayer and meditation."

"Oh! without doubt, father (Cavalier rejoined gaily) Ephraim is a saint; but, speaking frankly, has he not all the look of a devil? I believe myself as good a Protestant as he is, my carbine carries as far and as true as his long musket, but *pardieu!*"

"Enough, my son," said the old man.

"But—"

"Enough," repeated the Farmer making, with his hand, a gesture of such absolute authority, that the youth blushed and remained silent.

Every one at table kept their eyes cast down, so irreverent appeared to them the answers of John Cavalier.

After some minutes of silence, the old man resumed, addressing himself to his son, "you went to-day to see the haymaking near the valley of Saint Eulalie. How many cartloads were carried?"

"I do not know, father, (answered Cavalier with embarrassment) I did not go there."

"And why not?" asked the old man with severity.

"To-morrow is the fête of the Companions

of the Arquebuse; as I am their captain, I was obliged to go to Saol, to set up the mark."

"Yesterday, did you count the live stock on the farmstead of Vives-Eaux when they returned from the field?"

"No, father," answered Cavalier, vexed within himself at undergoing this public interrogatory, "the young men of Pont de Mont Vert, whom I teach the manual exercise in the evenings, kept me to supper, and I was not able to go to Vives-Eaux before folding time."

This additional disobedience incensed the old man, who exclaimed,

"And did I not forbid you henceforth to apply yourself to these murderous exercises, as dangerous as useless, fit only for idlers and vagabonds? Are peaceful, industrious labourers under any necessity of learning how to handle arms? Do not the edicts of the King, our master forbid such assemblages? Is it not strange that my son dares to violate the laws, notwithstanding my prohibition?"

Irritated by the reproaches of his father, Cavalier rejoined violently. "And what matter the laws if they are unjust? Did not my grandfather and my ancestors resist the laws? Did they not gloriously draw the sword

against the Philistines, and raise the cry 'To your tents, O Israel?' " exclaimed he, casting an expressive glance upon the labourers whom he hoped to strike with the recollection of this scriptural phrase, applied to the ancient religious insurrections.

But all preserved a mournful look. The grandmother joined her hands in terror at hearing her grandson speak so audaciously whilst Madame Cavalier, trembling, cast alternate glances of extreme sorrow on her husband and John Cavalier.

Alone calm in the midst of this family scene, the farmer gravely replied to John Cavalier:—

" My son ought to invoke no other authority than that which God has given me over him. I command, he obeys. I have something to say to him, let him go and wait for me in my room," he added, with a peremptory air.

Despite his assurance, despite the ardour of his character, John Cavalier left the table without a word, and obeyed, not daring to brave the commanding glance of his father, so much empire over him had the submis-

sive and respectful habits of his early education.

The supper having ended in the deepest sadness, and grace having been said by the farmer, he went to rejoin his son.

CHAPTER III.

JOHN CAVALIER.

BEFORE proceeding farther with this narration, we must say a few words as to the past life of John Cavalier, one of the principal actors of this story.

He was born in 1680 at Ribante, a village of the diocese of Alais, where his father possessed a farm, which he afterwards gave up to occupy that of St. Andéol near Mende.

John Cavalier, like his brother Gabriel, had in the first instance kept his father's flocks; but being soon invited to Anduze by one of his uncles, rich and childless, who followed the trade of a baker, the young Cevennese, then seventeen years of age, set out for that town.

Country life pleased him but little. His

imagination was lively, changeable, ardent; his character gay, bold, resolute, and perhaps rather vain than truly proud.

Although nurtured in the bosom of the pious and austere family of which we have attempted to give a sketch, John Cavalier had neither the visionary faith of Celeste and Gabriel, nor the rigid puritanism of his father. Sufficiently exact in fulfilling the duties of his religion, he missed no opportunity of amusing himself.

Two years passed thus. At nineteen years of age, Cavalier, young, brave, mirthful, well-made, and a ready speaker, soon became the hero of the artizans of Anduze.

Some men possess by nature the faculty of acquiring power over their species. In Cavalier this faculty was already developed; he alone directed the games and the exercises of his guild. Every where he was the leader amongst his comrades, at wrestling, pitching the bar, or running. An old Protestant captain, who had served all the religious wars of the great Duke of Rohan, as the Huguenots called him, gave him even some lessons of fencing.

An event, apparently insignificant, changed the career of Cavalier.

It was the year 1699; the edicts against the Potestants who persevered in their religion, became frightfully severe.

Louis XIV. ordered garrisons to be stationed in the towns and villages where *fanaticism*, as the Protestant religion was then called, was most deeply rooted. The town of Anduze was comprised in this operation; a company of dragoons of the regiment of St. Sernin, commanded by the young Marquis of Florac, took military possession of the place.

On St. John's day, one of the fetes most celebrated in Languedoc, Cavalier laid aside his baker's apron, donned his gayest doublet, and went to the house of the old Huguenot captain, who had given him lessons in fencing. This good man, by name Dominique Pompadour, had a daughter of a beauty so remarkable, that she was known by the name of the Fair Isabelle. She loved Cavalier, and Cavalier loved her. We shall speak hereafter, more at length of this honourable passion, which plays so great a part in the life of the young Cevennese.

The bonfire of St. John was lit in the

market place of Anduze. Cavalier was to conduct the captain and his daughter to this ceremony.

As they were setting out, the fair Isabelle offered her lover a pretty branch of a flowering pomegranate which she had gathered in her garden. Cavalier placed the *bouquet* proudly in his felt hat. The captain, his daughter, and the young baker arrived at the bonfire.

The Marquis of Florac, in command of the dragoons, happened to be in the market place; he appeared very much struck with the charms of the Fair Isabelle, and two or three times he passed before her, looking at her with the most provoking attention.

Despite the grey *moustache* of the old captain, which seemed to bristle with fury, despite the threatening eyes of Cavalier, despite the disdainful coldness of the fair Cevennese, M. de Florac continued to persecute the young girl with his glances.

Cavalier, exasperated, quitted the arm of Isabelle, and making up boldly to the Marquis, said "Monsieur the captain, I—"

But M. de Florac interrupted him, and said roughly: "The bread which your master supplied me yesterday was bad; and to-morrow's

will be no better, which would not happen, you idle fellow, if you stopped at home to watch your oven, instead of coming to the *fête.*"

Despite the respect and fear which the dragoons inspired, despite the rank and grade of the Marquis, Cavalier, furious at finding himself treated in this manner before the fair Isabelle, cried out:

"If I had a sword, and a fair field, monsieur, this insult would not be unpunished."

"And what would you do with a sword, clown?" said M. de Florac, with an air of contempt, "a baker's peel is what you want. Come, put on your apron, and go back to your oven."

At this fresh insult the young baker could restrain himself no longer; he drew the sword of the Captain, and precipitated himself on M. de Florac; but the latter, pointing out Cavalier to several dragoons who had drawn near, said to them:

"Arrest this madman."

Cavalier was full of vigour, a struggle took place, his companions came to his assistance; he succeeded in escaping from the soldiers, and quitted Anduze the same night.

Fearing the results of this quarrel, he accompanied some Religionists, who, flying from the Edicts, were expatriating themselves to Geneva; he remained eighteen months in this town.

In Switzerland he made the acquaintance of a Protestant gentleman named Du Serre, who, as we have said, exercised the professsion of a glass-maker in the Chateau of Mas-Arribas, situated at the summit of the mountain of Aygoal in the wildest, and most isolated position.

Strange reports were circulated concerning this gentleman. The art of manufacturing and staining glass was so much the result of chemistry, a science which the vulgar then regarded as occult, that M. Du Serre who lived very retired amongst his "gentlemen blowers",* should not be suspected of alchymy, and even of magic by the weaker minds. The Catholics, then, considered Du Serre not very far from a sorcerer, while many of the lower order of

* "The workmen who labour at this noble art are all gentlemen, and they do not admit any whom they do not recognize as such. They have obtained many valuable and honourable privileges for their profession." (4th. Article On the art of making glass, 1657, Handigner Blancourt).

Protestants saw, on the contrary, in the manufacturer, a man so distinguished on account of his austere piety, that the Almighty might deign sometimes to manifest himself to him. It was to these supernatural communications that some attributed the strange lights which sometimes lit up the towers of Mas-Arribas. Others saw in them omens of evil.

Du Serre, under pretext of commercial purposes, often visited Geneva without being troubled by M. de Baville, the Lieutenant of Languedoc, on account of his frequent absences from France.

The father of Cavalier, being an inhabitant of the neighbourhood of the glass-maker, had often entrusted him with the remittance to his son of the money which he sent to Geneva. John Cavalier and Du Serre soon became intimate.

The latter, who had the art to evade the suspicions and the vigilance of M. de Baville, was, nevertheless, one of the most active leaders of the Protestant Union. Since the revocation of the Edict of Nantes this secret society, at certain periods of the year, sent secretly to Toulouse sixteen deputies charged with the duty of representing the Calvinism of

Upper and Lower Languedoc, the Cevennes, the Vivarez, and Dauphiny, and of conferring upon the interests of the Reformed Religion.

In these assemblies was laid the first basis of the "Meetings in the Desert", it was there that the deputies, chosen among the most honourable of the Protestants, resolved, in the name of their brethren, "to persist in the exercise of their religion by every means which did not lead to rebellion; to assemble and pray in broad daylight over the ruins of their churches; not to leave France, and to undergo martyrdom rather than renounce the faith."

Since the revocation of the Edict of Nantes to the peace of Ryswick, the Calvinists remained immoveable in this resolution, although many religious assemblages had been massacred, although many ministers had been hanged, broken on the wheel or burnt, for having preached in defiance of the Edicts.

But since 1700 the butcheries of the religionists had become so frequent, so many ministers had fallen the victims of their zeal, that the Union decided that the Protestants should henceforth assemble only in the night always unarmed, always resigned to die without resistance.

At the period of the aggravation of the persecution, Du Serre met Cavalier at Geneva. The gentleman glass-maker recognised in the young Cevennese courage, an energetic will, talents, pride, and above all, the germs of an immoderate ambition. With an eye to the future, he made use of his experience to direct and form Cavalier according to his views. During the two years which he passed at Geneva, Cavalier, by his advice, acquired some knowledge of mathematics, studied with assiduity the manœuvres of troops; learnt the use of arms, and frequented much the meetings of the Protestants. The enterprizing character of Cavalier was singularly excited by these meetings, where the fate of the Calvinists, and the cruelty of their persecutors were painted in the blackest, and, therefore, truest colours. He became soon one of the most ardent members of the Militant party.*

Cavalier had always been deficient in a serious and profound belief in his religion. His manners without being profligate, were not irreproachable; his adventurous, versatile,

* This name was given to the very small minority amongs the Protestants who wished, as in the times of Condé and Rohan, to support their just remonstrances by force of arms.

daring temperament had nothing of the Calvinistic rigidity. After attendance on divine service Cavalier rushed with ardour to profane amusements. When he sometimes met members of the Catholic aristocracy at Geneva, he found himself more disgusted by their pretensions, than by their opinions. In them he hated the noble more than the Papist, and was almost inclined to envy the golden spurs and the embroidered scarfs of these "proud plumelings," although those of his Religion made these very ornaments the subject of reproach as so many miserable vanities.

Convinced of the impossibility of changing the nature of Cavalier, Du Serre, like a superior intellect, accepted him with his qualifications and demerits.

To maintain and augment the exaltation of the young Cevennese he showed him in the Reformed Church the religious question connected, perhaps even subordinate with the political question,—the goods, the liberty of Protestants attacked as well as their consciences.

He showed him in the future a social regeneration based on the spirit, and the right of self-examination, that fundamental distinction of the Protestant religion. He showed him, in

fine, in the future the realization of the idea of Calvin, "kings subordinate to the three orders of the state, three orders composed of the true guardians of the People."*

Speaking thus, Du Serre completely distorted the wishes and principles of the majority of the Protestants who never considered the religious question in its political point of view. But Du Serre had his reasons for acting in this manner.

Thanks to his instruction, Cavalier looked upon a Papist, pretty much as the narrow liberalism of the nineteenth century has sometimes looked upon the ultra-royalists.

It is not time as yet to unveil the projects of Du Serre, and above all the strange, frightful, unheard of means which he reckoned upon putting into execution to ensure their success. Upon him alone depended certain eventualities almost miraculous. These could raise *en masse* the population of the Cevennes, till then so impassibly resigned to martyrdom. The glass-maker wished to have Cavalier always under his hand, in order to make of him a terrible Guerilla chief, if the hour should come to appeal to arms.

* Calvin. Letters 16, 128.

After two years of voluntary exile, the motive which obliged Cavalier's absence appeared forgotten, Du Serre recommended him to return to France.

Often the young Cevennese and the gentleman glass-maker conspired with other persons of the country but always in the night, in solitary places and with the most profound secresy. According to the advice of Du Serre, who without allowing his projects to be penetrated, did not appear far from believing in the possibility of a speedy revolt, Cavalier courted much the company of young men of his own age and condition.

At St. Andeol, at Saal, at Pont de Mont Vert, he made many friends by his resolute and lively character. He organized a gun-club, wrestling-matches, and games of strength and address; very soon all the young men of the adjacent parishes loved Cavalier as a gay and determined lad, and a devout worshipper of pleasure.

Although the relations which subsisted between them and Cavalier were only founded upon their common amusements, they were frequent and his authority over his companions augmented every day. Although this power

was apparently unimportant it existed nevertheless. In order to acquire and preserve it, the young Cevennese had followed the counsels of Du Serre.

Cavalier loved and venerated his father, but he knew too well the inflexibility of his principles not to have always hid from him his relations with the glass-maker, and above all the vague hopes which he nourished.

He had also endeavoured to dissimulate from his father the influence which he exercised over the youth of the neighbourhood.

There existed a great difference between the Religionists of the plain or of the towns, and the Religionists who lived habitually in the mountains as shepherds or wood-cutters.

These last, doubtless as a consequence of their wild and contemplative life, had if not more faith, at least more religious enthusiasm than the inhabitants of the lowlands. Ephraim, the Forest-keeper of Aygoal, renowned for the sombre austerity of his life and for his piety, exercised over these an absolute empire.

The Protestants of the plain, the artisans of the townships thought Ephraim too Puritan, and too enthusiastic. Cavalier, on the contrary, young, handsome, joyous, brave, training them

to the use of arms, and making himself the soul of their rural games, inspired them with much confidence and with a devoted affection.

So, in the event of an insurrection, Ephraim would have been the chief of the Religionists of the mountains, as Cavalier would have been the chief of the lowland Protestants.

Since his young and lively imagination had been filled with dreams of ambition, since he had become eager for the adventurous career of the Bajols, the Merles, the Cyprians, those Huguenot chiefs who, during the civil wars had so valiantly combated at the head of provinces in insurrection, John Cavalier had conceived an aversion for the calm and monotony of country life.

We have spoken of his love for the daughter of an ancient Protestant captain. The fair Isabelle also tenderly loved Cavalier. After his quarrel with the Marquis of Florac, being obliged to become an exile, he had maintained a regular correspondence with this young girl. She and Cavalier waited only for better days to demand from their relations permission to unite themselves in marriage. After some time Isabelle ceased at once to write to her intended. Cavalier, disturbed and miserable through this

silence, was about perhaps imprudently to re-enter France, when Du Serre arriving at Geneva gave him a letter of the young lady. She informed him that being obliged to set off with her father for La Rouergue, she could only let him hear from her at long intervals, but that nothing had changed, that nothing would change in her sentiments for him.

The sorrow of Cavalier was at first deep and poignant. By degrees, without forgetting Isabelle, he supported his affliction with more courage. He had the promise of his mistress; from time to time he received a letter from her full of protestations of an eternal love; he waited then with patience his return from exile.

A less sincere affection would perhaps have become weakened by absence and difficulties, but Cavalier felt for Isabelle a serious affection, grave, almost solemn; he had a profound faith in her. The proud, generous, heroic character of this masculine girl inspired him with as much admiration as love; he felt for her one of those powerful passions to which men connect all the important phases of their destiny, and which serve, so to speak, to mark out the Future as with a measuring rod. Isabelle was the woman that Cavalier wished to marry, well assured

that she would resolutely share with him his good, bad, or changeful fortune.

On his return to France he learnt by a letter of Isabelle that she had been obliged to quit the Rouergue to follow her father into Guienne, before the end of the year she was to return to Anduze.

If Cavalier had been of a less versatile disposition, or of a less ardent character, if the half-confidences which Du Serre made to him had not pre-occupied him, if the instinct of ambition, which continually agitated the young Cevennese, had not made him contemplative and absent, he would have perceived that his family and friends never answered without a certain embarrassment, to his enquiries about the fair Isabelle.

It was because the hour of a great revelation was not yet come.

Since some time old Jerome Cavalier had attentively watched the conduct of his eldest son; he had not penetrated the secret of his intercourse with Du Serre; but from the exaltation which sometimes manifested itself in the ideas of John, from his greater assumption of manner, from the disgust which he daily manifested more and more for rural labour,

from the pride which transpired against his will in his conversation, the farmer augured that his son, carried away by the fire of his adventurous character, was about perhaps to enter upon a fatal path.

The allusion which John had that very evening made at supper, to the military part sustained by his ancestors in the civil wars, had also added to the fears of the old man. Circumstances were becoming trying, persecution pressed with ever-increasing weight upon those unhappy countries. The arrival of the Arch-Priest of the Cevennes, the Abbe of Chayla, was announced at the head of an imposing force. This redoubted Priest made the whole circuit of Languedoc, preceded by a terrific reputation. He caused the ruthless execution of edicts which applied to all Protestants the frightful penalties decreed against the relapsed. Still the Religionists remained carm, resigned; their outlawed pastors had, above all, enjoined upon them the sad and mute tranquillity of martyrs. The Lord was to warn his people, by the voice of his prophets, of the moment when it would be lawful to repel force by force.

This day doubtless never would arrive;

but Jerome Cavalier, like a great number of Protestants, trembled lest some imprudent declamation should cause the explosion of a discontent which had been long suppressed. Instructed by experience, he knew that the least attempt at revolt would be the signal of the ruin, of the extermination of the Protestants of Languedoc.

For a long time he reflected on what he had to do, in order to snatch his son from idleness, to create for him an active, industrious life, and to drive from him dangerous temptations. The farmer resolved to marry him. He cast his eyes on the daughter of a rich farmer of Mende, proposed his son, and procured his acceptance. All was nearly settled between the families, while John Cavalier was yet ignorant of their arrangements.

Accustomed to see everything bow before his own inflexible will, the aged Protestant doubted not of the obedience of his son. He expected some difficulty in reference to Isabelle, but he knew a sure method of overcoming that obstacle.

It was then, on the point of holding with his son this important conversation, that the farmer

entered, with a severe and displeased look, the room in which Cavalier awaited him.

NOTE. The following Articles, extracted from the Confessions of Faith of the Reformed Churches of France, will show to what extent the doctrines of Divine Right and passive obedience were embodied in that form of religious belief, whose tendency to republicanism and disloyalty were the constant pretext of its royal persecutors. Artic. xxxix. We believe that God desires this world to be governed by laws and policy, so that there may be some reins to curb in its unruly appetites. And therefore that he has established kingdoms, republics, and all other forms of government, hereditary or otherwise, and everything which appertains to the administration of justice, and that he desires to be recognised as their author. . . . Therefore for His sake we must not only allow our superiors to rule, but must also honour and prize them with all reverence, holding them for his lieutenants and officers. Artic. xl. We hold then that we must obey their laws and statutes, pay tributes, imposts, and other duties, and bear the yoke of subjection with a good and free will, even if they should be infidels, without prejudice to the sovereign empire of God. Therefore we detest those who wish to destroy authorities, to create community and confusion in property, and to reverse the order of justice. TR.

CHAPTER IV.

FATHER AND SON.

THE Protestant sat down. Cavalier remained standing in his father's presence; his air was at once respectful and disconcerted.

"My son has just answered me at supper as it does not become a dutiful son," said the old man in a grave voice.

Cavalier noticed, not without emotion, that his father spoke to him in the third person, a form which he never employed except on solemn occasions, so he made answer submissively, "Pardon me, my father—I repent!"

"It is well. For the future let my son never pronounce foolish words before our labourers and servants. It is for us to give them an example of submission to the will and laws of the King, our master."

"Our master!" repeated Cavalier, with a proud impatience.

After having cast upon his son a severe look, the Farmer said to him:

"The pride of my son is very great, but it must be humbled—"

"What do you mean father?"

The old man continued, without appearing to have heard this question.

"I will exercise with firmness the power which the Lord gives to parents over their children, to snatch my son from the dangerous path in which he walks."

There was a calm so cold, so resolved in the tone of the old man that Cavalier felt himself at once wounded and terrified by this exordium, in which the paternal will revealed itself in all its majestic despotism.

"I know not of what danger you would speak, father," he continued in a tone somewhat more humble.

But the old man continued without appearing to pay attention to what his son was saying.

"Since his return from Geneva, my son busies himself with vanities. I confided to him the care of my fields; he has not watched them. He runs to fêtes, he passes his days in

idleness, he is ashamed, I believe, of our laborious condition. Pride, pride which will ruin him, if his father does not watch over him with a severe eye, has taken possession of him; he revolts against the thought of having a king, a master: this is most fatal. He who denies to-day the authority of his Sovereign, will deny to-morrow the authority of his father, then that of his God—"

"Can you imagine that? Have I ever failed in respect to you, father?"

"My son cannot fail in respect to me, but it does not suffice that he should be respectful, he must be useful to his family, useful to his country, he must work; he must —like me—cultivate the earth with pain in the heat of the day, so that in the evening he may rest, calm and contented, at the door of his house, in the midst of his family."

"I honor the labours of the field, my father, but there is more than one way of serving our country; I have studied at Geneva and—"

"My son has learnt nothing at Geneva, and if he had learnt many sciences, he knows that he can neither be an advocate, nor a physician, nor a notary, nor a scribe, nor a clerk, nor an attorney, nor a merchant. He knows that

he cannot fill any public employ, the edicts of the King will not permit it."*

"And these infamous edicts are revolting to me!" cried Cavalier, with violence. "Why this shameful exclusion? Why are we a people oppressed in the midst of a people of oppressors? By what right are we put out of the pale of the law? By what right, I ask?"

"And by what right do you wish to escape martyrdom, if God inflicts it upon you? And what is to-day in comparison with eternity? And what is a fleeting tyranny in comparison with an eternal repartion?" asked the old man with lively indignation.

"But the injustice?"

"I do not discuss with my son," said the farmer making with his hand a gesture of command. "Even as I have served my country, so will he; as I am a labourer, so will he also be a labourer. I have laboured my share—I am old—I have need of rest. He is young and strong. Let him take my place at the plough, and continue the furrow which I have begun. One day, if the Lord blesses him as He hath blessed

* The exercise of these professions was forbidden to the Protestants by the Ordinances of the King, of the 11th. July, 5th. and 17th. November 1685. 15th. June 1682. 10th. July 1685, 11th. June 1686, and 6th. August, in the same year.

me, he will see his son replace him in his turn. Therefore from next St. John's Day, my son will work this farm under my inspection; as he is of age to take unto himself a wife, he will wed the eldest daughter of Anthony Alais, of Mende. All is agreed between me and Anthony; I have acquainted my wife. To-morrow my son will accompany me to Mende."

These brief, abrupt phrases, whose grave and somewhat figurative turn, revealed an habitual study of the sacred volume—were uttered by the old man, so authoritatively, it appeared so evident by the inflexion of his voice, by the expression of his countenance, that he did not even suppose an objection to his will possible, that John Cavalier remained astounded. He did not return to himself till his father said, rising and going to the door:

"Let us go. It is the hour of prayer."

"My father! one moment," said Cavalier, seizing the hand of the old man who prepared to go out; "pardon me—but doubtless I have misunderstood you. You spoke to me of a marriage?"

"I have announced to my son his approach-

ing marriage, with the daughter of Anthony Alais, of Mende."

The face of Cavalier expressed the profoundest astonishment, and he cried:

"But you know well, my father, that this is impossible?"

The farmer cast upon his son, a severe, impassive look; without answering, he made a step towards the door.

"Listen to me, father; for pity's sake, listen to me!—I cannot marry the daughter of Anthony Alais, you would not wish me to be miserable, to be perjured; you know well that Isabelle has my faith as I have hers; you know well that I love her, and that she alone shall be my wife!"

"My son will not pronounce again, the name of Isabelle, before me—and will marry the wife whom I have chosen for him."

"Never!" cried Cavalier, provoked beyond endurance, by the immovable firmness of his father.

The farmer, reflecting that his son might reasonably be astounded, at this prohibition to think any more of Isabelle, a prohibition which nothing appeared to justify—returned to the

middle of the room, and said to his son, with an accent less severe:

"My son cannot think that I exact anything from him, contrary to his happiness, or to his plighted faith. When I say to him that he must no more pronounce the name of Isabelle before me, it is because that name ought to be pronounced no more; when I tell him that he is released from his promise, it is because he *is* released."

John Cavalier had a profound veneration for his father's character; these words terrified him; at first, he staggered beneath this unexpected blow, then, urged by a fearful curiosity, he said to the farmer:

"Without doubt, I believe you, my father —but, in fine, why am I released from my promise to Isabelle?—Why must I no more pronounce that name before you?"

The features of Cavalier expressed a torturing anxiety; the Farmer, who in spite of his apparent coldness, loved his son dearly, felt himself painfully affected. Changing his tone at once, he held out his hand to Cavalier, and said to him:

"Ask me no more; my child."

This action, these simple words, the emotion that his father could not control, gave John Cavalier the presentiment of some horrible calamity; recollecting at the same time, that for two months he had not heard from Isabelle, he cried in despair:

"She is not dead?"

"She is not dead," answered the old man.

"But she is ill, she is dying perhaps?"

"Her health is good."

"She lives—and I am released from my promise to her? She lives—and I must never more pronounce her name before you, my father?" said Cavalier slowly, and as if he sought to penetrate the sense of this enigma. "Then she is disgraced! Father, father, answer me, then she is disgraced?"

After a long silence, in which John Cavalier fixed eager glances upon his father, the old man answered with a loud and solemn voice, as if he pronounced a curse:

"She is disgraced!"

Cavalier remained at first stunned by these words. When the first whirl of his stupefaction was over, Doubt stepped in, and with it Hope; he so loved Isabelle that he could not believe his father's words.

"My father, you have been deceived," he continued, "what you say is impossible. For the last two years Isabelle has written to me that she loved me; she is faithful, she is brave, she would not stoop to falsehood. No, no, father, you have been deceived!"

The farmer entered into all the suffering of his son; instead of answering him with severity, he said mildly:

"My son, believe me, I have not been deceived. If I have long kept silence on this base treachery, it was because the hour had not come to inform you of it, it was because it was useless to give you extreme pain. Perhaps in this I have shown weakness, I ought to have told you all on your return from Geneva; but now ask me no more, believe my word. My child, I have never accused an innocent person. Forget this criminal for ever—think of the union which I have prepared for you, you will find in it happiness and peace."

Cavalier deceived himself as to the intentions of his father; for the first time in his life he believed that the old man had acted with bad faith in order to make him contract the marriage which he had planned, and that Isabelle was basely calumniated.

"Isabelle is accused in her absence," he said resolutely to his father, "I am not acquainted with her crime. Well, I will not marry before I know what is laid to her charge, before I have heard her defend herself."

"My son," said the old man harshly, recalled to his severe manner by the doubt which Cavalier had expressed.

"And besides," continued Cavalier, "who will assure me that you do not sacrifice Isabelle to your desire to make me contract a marriage which is convenient to you?"

"Unhappy fool!" said the old man, indignantly, "thou darest to suspect thy father! Learn then all; learn what through pity I wished to conceal from thee. When thou didst quit Anduze, that wretched creature allowed herself to be seduced by the Marquis of Florac, captain of the dragoons of St. Sernin, the very person who caused thy exile. Everywhere the object of maledictions, she has been obliged to leave the country. And now wilt thou believe me?"

"Ah, my father! this is horrible, have pity on me!" said the unhappy youth falling on his knees before the old man, and hiding his face in his hands to stifle his sobbings.

Two hours after this revelation, at midnight, John Cavalier left the farm cautiously. In order to be heard by no one, he directed his path rapidly towards the foot of the hill where the Keeper of Aygoal had killed the wolf.

At this spot a stone cross, called in the district the Cross of Blood, doubtless in memory of some tragical occurrence, was erected in a crossway wherein met the four principal roads of the Hort-Diou.

CHAPTER V.

THE CROSS OF BLOOD.

JOHN CAVALIER, while proceeding to the Cross of Blood where he expected to meet Ephraim and Du Serre, was a prey to the wildest feelings of despair. His rage against Isabelle, as well as against her seducer, was one of almost frantic violence. He had till then so blindly confided in the love of this young girl, he believed her so absolutely won for his own, that this abrupt discovery, this ruin of all his hopes was to him doubly fearful.

Sometimes he accused Isabelle alone of this foul treason, sometimes on the contrary he allowed the whole weight of his hatred to fall on M. de Florac. But when he thought of the odious duplicity of his mistress, who had recently written to him fresh protestations of

eternal love, he thought her perhaps still more worthy of exercration than the Marquis.

And still the image of Isabelle had always shared the ambitious dreams of Cavalier. She had always appeared to him so superior to her birth by the elevation of her mind and character, that, in his wildest visions of future glory, this heroic woman was always at his side.

Diving into his own recollections, he believed even that his first instincts of ambition had awakened with his love for Isabelle, and that it was for her sake that he had thought of rising above his humble condition.

At other times, he passed from the transports of anger to the enervating sorrows of memory; he recollected the least words of his mistress, her candour, her frankness, the severity of her remonstrances when she reproached him with his ideas at once glorious and vain, the advice, full of sense and maturity, which she gave him in her letters.

He asked himself then how so brave a heart could have descended to such base infamy.

As it frequently happens, the personal absorbed the general question; in his resentment against the Marquis of Florac Cavalier included all the Catholics. If with a sign he could have

raised the Protestant population to march in arms against the aristocratic and Papist class, insurrection would have been instantly declared.

This meeting with Ephraim and Abraham Du Serre, which he had not forgotten in the midst of the agitation of his grief, was to him precious as vengeance.

After having walked sometime, Cavalier found himself on the confines of a vast heath which separated the Forest of Aygoal from the hills of the Hort-Diou. Four roads crossed this plain, at their point of intersection rose a high and gothic cross of stone.

The night was clear and starry.

Cavalier, seeing some one at the foot of the cross, approached him with circumspection.

"'*Blow ye the cornet in Gibeah*,'" said, in a muffled voice, the person who had preceded him at the rendezvous.

Cavalier answered this watch-word by these words borrowed from the same verse of the Bible "'*And the trumpet in Ramah.*'"

Then approaching him, he said, according to the form in use amongst the Religionists:

"Good evening, brother Ephraim, has our brother Abraham not come as yet?"

"Not as yet," said Ephraim.

Cavalier, absorbed in his thoughts, was about to seat himself on the pedestal of the cross, but when he had approached it, he cried out:

"Ephraim, what is there hung up to this pillar? the carcase of a dog?"

The Keeper rose silently, took a steel of out his pouch, struck a light, plucked a handful of dry heath, set it on fire, and springing, with a vigorous, bound upon its pedestal, threw the light upon the cross.

Upon its arms of stone, above the half-devoured carcass of the wolf which was suspended to them, appeared these words, traced with charcoal:

"So perish the Arch-Priest of Baal—So perish the ravening wolves!"

Cavalier shuddered as he looked upon the ferocious countenance of this man; and read, by the light of the torch, this sentence of death traced in a moment of savage enthusiasm.

The light burnt out, everything fell again into darkness.

The profound silence of the night was interterrupted by the noise of steps.

Ephraim and Cavalier arose, listened with attention, a man soon appeared.

"'*Cry aloud at Beth-Avon,*'" said Ephraim.

"'*The enemy is behind thee, Benjamin,*'"* answered the new comer.

"It is brother Abraham!" said at once Cavalier and Ephraim advancing to him.

Abraham Du Serre, of a noble and ancient family of Languedoc, was then fifty years old. He was tall, thin, and strongly made; profound wrinkles furrowed his pale countenance which wore an expression at once harsh and sarcastic; his forehead and temples were completely bald; his eyebrows, as grey as his whiskers, almost covered his sparkling eyes. He wore a peasant's frock, leather gaiters and a broad brimmed straw hat and carried in his hand a staff shod with iron.

Absorbed by his prevailing and fatal idea, when Cavalier saw Du Serre, despite the importance of the interests of which he came to speak, he thought only of learning something about Isabelle.

"Brother Abraham," he said to him with a voice trembling with emotion, taking him aside, "my father has told me everything about

* These passwords are all taken from Hos. v. 8. as it is rendered in the French Protestant version.

Isabelle; he has told me that she has been basely deceived. He has told me that she has been seduced!" added Cavalier with an increasing fury. "Once more, is it true? Is it true?"

For some moments Du Serre had looked at Cavalier with an air at once of disdain and wonder. Suddenly he cried indignantly,

"Brother Ephraim, brave lion of Israel, come here, to hear this man lament, for I know not what abandoned woman. They are preparing to massacre his brethren, and he only thinks of weeping over some vain lost love! Do you then believe, brother John Cavalier, that it is to hear such follies that the sacred hour of midnight assembles us in the desert?"

"'*Weep for the dead, for he hath lost the light, and weep for the fool, for he wanteth understanding,*'"* said Ephraim gloomily. Then he added, "I have already told you, brother, this boy is too weak, he is too young, he is too vain to labour like us in the Lord's vineyard. May the evil which he will occasion to our cause fall upon his own head?"

Whether he felt the justice of the reproaches of Du Serre, or whether he was offended by

* Ecclesiasticus c. 22, v. 11.

them, Cavalier did not answer them, but addressing himself to Ephraim, he said proudly:

"If with a blast of thy horn thou canst gather round thee the goatherds of the mountains and the wood-cutters of the forest, my voice is known to the labourer of the plain, and the artizans of the towns. Raise the cry, 'To your tents, O Israel!' and see whether he who trained the youth of St. Andéol, of Anduze, and of Pont Mont Vert to the manual exercise was too young or too weak."

"There is no need of knowing the manual exercise to serve the cause of the Lord!" cried Ephraim with a crushing contempt. "Did Sampson know the manual exercise? Did David know the manual exercise? Let the shepherd take up his crook, let the labourer take up his ploughshare, the miller his flail, and the mower his scythe, and the women and children the stones of the streets. If the voice of God guides them, Israel will triumph. For *her* arms are Faith!".

Du Serre, fearing to see a dangerous disagreement arise between Cavalier and Ephraim said to the first: "Brother Cavalier, you are brave. I know it, and therefore was astonished at thy weakness. Time presses. Let us

agree as to our facts. New dangers threaten us. I come from Montpellier, the Marechal de Mont Revel assembles a considerable body of troops, and bodies of militia are raised on all sides to put into execution the new edicts which treat us all equally as relapsed."

"Against whom are these forces destined, since our brethren know only how to resign themselves to death?" said Cavalier bitterly.

"This mute and impassive martyrdom frightens Baville," said Du Serre. "Unworthy to comprehend the holy self-denial of his victims, he believes that it hides a snare and he puts himself upon his guard. Yesterday, passing by Alais, I met the Archpriest of Chayla; he is rapidly approaching us, dragging our brethren along in the *ceps*;* they are women, children, young maidens, and old men."

"And whither does he lead these unfortunates?" asked Cavalier.

"To the ancient Abbey of Mont-Vert where he is going to establish himself with a strong

* A beam split lengthwise, in the middle of which were placed the feet of prisoners, was then called a cep. This name involved a sort of horrible metaphor; the proper meaning of the word is a vine plant on which grapes are growing.—Translator.

garrison, until, as the catholics say, he has completely extirpated heresy from our mountains. Paul, the savage guerilla Paul, accompanies the Archpriest with his Miquelets, as well as two companies of the dragoons of St. Sernin, commanded by the Marquis of Florac."

Du Serre, whether he knew not the name of the seducer of Isabelle, or had forgotten it, was far from expecting the impression which this name had occasioned on Cavalier. The latter, though he felt himself turn pale, restrained himself, and mindful of the late reproaches of Du Serre, he said in a constrained voice,

"Does the Marquis of Florac command the two companies of dragoons who escort the Archpriest?"

"Yes. They say that this captain is rather careless than illnatured; he is brave, but dissolute, haughty, and godless like all those booted missionaries whom they send to convert us."

"It is indeed the young Marquis of Florac,' who commands the two dragoon companies of St. Sernin; is it not?" asked Cavalier a second time.

"Himself; he is at most twenty five years of age, is fair, and has the face of a woman,

said Du Serre without knowing what interest Cavalier attached to this information."

"It is he!" said Cavalier, and he remained thoughtful.

"The Archpriest of Baal comes into this diocese," said Ephraim speaking to himself, "is then the vision about to be fulfilled?"

"What vision, brother?" asked Du Serre.

"This night, I was carried away in the spirit," said Ephraim with a gloomy enthusiasm. "I saw the Pale Horse of the Apocalypse and his name that sat on him was Death. He showed pale in the black night. A strong voice like the roaring of a lion, said to me, "The wolf which would devour the lamb without spot will appear to-morrow in the field of the Lord. Thou shalt slay the wolf, thou shalt hang him to the accursed cross, and the sight shall scare the ravening wolves.' This morning, the wolf appeared, I killed him, he is there."

And Ephraim pointed to the cross. Then he added in a savage tone."

"When that other wolf, ravening for souls, the Archpriest of the Cevennes shall have been hanged there the whole vision will be accom-

plished. Every vision is double," added Ephraim and he sunk into a sullen silence.

"Listen to me, listen to me!" said Du Serre. "When once the Archpriest is at Pont de Mont Vert in the heart of this country the persecution will be redoubled. The voice of the Lord is like the tempest, it bursts forth in the midst of the calm. If it should burst forth in a few days to cry to us 'To arms!' couldst thou, brother Cavalier, answer for the men of the Plain, couldst thou, brother Ephraim, for the mountaineers?"

"Let the voice of the Lord thunder from on high," said Ephraim, "*and the remnant of Jacob shall be among the Gentiles as a lion among the beasts of the forest, as a young lion among the flocks of sheep, who treadeth down and teareth in pieces, and none can deliver.*'"*

After some minutes of silence, Cavalier said briefly and firmly:

"I can answer so well for the people of the Plain that to-morrow, at sunset, they will be in arms whether the voice of God speaks or not; and, by Heaven! not a soldier of St. Sernin shall leave these mountains alive."

* 5th. Micah v. 8.

"That would ruin our cause for ever!" cried Du Serre, alarmed at the determined tone of the young man. "In heaven's name, John Cavalier, do not do that!"

"I will not draw the sword from the scabbard before the voice of the Lord has spoken, and it has not spoken," said Ephraim, shaking his head.

"Then will the mountaineers leave to the men of the Plain the glory of driving the Philistines out of the field of God?" said Cavalier proudly. "The voice of the Lord will hereafter approve us."

"But I tell you that you ruin us," repeated Du Serre. "It is not time. The hour is not yet come. A partial movement will be instantly crushed."

"There has been too much delay, and weakness already. The hour is come, for the youth of the Plain will arise at my voice," said Cavalier obstinately.

"And I," cried Du Serre, in a voice of authority, "I tell you, proud and foolish youth, that your voice will not be heard. Our brothers of the Plain, like our brothers of the mountains, will remain faithful to the will of their Pastors, who, while they perished at the

stake or on the wheel, commanded them not to rush to arms if the voice of the Lord did not cry to them 'To arms!' Our brothers of the Plain love thee, they love thy youth and courage, I know it. Well, I defy thee to throw one of them into armed rebellion before the Lord hath spoken!"

Du Serre was right, Cavalier felt it. Despite his influence over the youth of the districts, he knew well that the last dying injunction of their martyred ministers was all powerful over the minds of the Protestants.

Du Serre, seeing the impression which his answer made upon Cavalier, added:

"I tell you, await the hour with patience, it will strike. Thy sword will not always remain in the scabbard, brother Cavalier. Sometimes God reveals himself to the weak. A secret voice tells me that great events are at hand; that strange sights will be revealed; that the day is not far when men will hardly believe what they see."

At this instant, Cavalier suddenly interrupted Du Serre, he seized him sharply by the arm, and said to him:

"Listen, listen!"

All listened attentively.

The heath which covered the Plain formed upon the soil a sort of carpet so thick, that a platoon of dragoons had been able to approach very near to the three Cevennese without being heard.

But, when they had come within a short distance, the clatter of their arms betrayed them.

"The dragoons!" cried Cavalier.

"The secret of our rendezvous is discovered," said Du Serre, with a loud voice, "let us try to escape through the hedges. And on Saturday, here."

"I see white frocks at the foot of the cross!" cried a rough voice. "Ho, there, rascals! stir not a step, *mordieu!* or we fire!"

Ephraim, Du Serre, and Cavalier instead of obeying the orders of the dragoons, cleared at a spring a thick furze hedge which surrounded the crossway, and fled across the fields in different directions.

"Fire, fire!" cried the Brigadier, who commanded the detachment.

Two or three shots flashed in the darkness; but not one of the Cevennese was wounded.

CHAPTER VI.

THE EXAMINATION.

SOMETIMES hiding beneath the hedges of furze which formed the fences of the fields of Languedoc, sometimes climbing the steeps of the ravines, Cavalier, who knew the country perfectly, escaped the pursuit of the dragoons, and soon reached the township of Andéol.

As he approached his father's farm, he heard an unusual noise. He saw with much surprise the horses, and working bullocks, having doubtless been driven from their stable, wandering or grazing in the meadow. Lights appeared and disappeared in the windows. All announced that a great commotion reigned in the house. Thick wreaths of smoke escaped from the chimney. A great fire, which seemed to be

kindled in the yard, cast its tremulous reflection on the trees and buildings.

Cavalier, more and more anxious, was about to enter his father's house when he heard the galloping of several horses.

In order to escape being taken, he had only time to climb upon a stone bench, and to ascend into the thick boughs of a huge walnut tree whose branches touched the walls of the house.

Scarcely was he hidden there before five dragoons, doubtless his pursuers, dismounted at the gate of the farm.

Disorder and confusion reigned in this household, which had always been so regular and peaceful.

A party of dragoons bivouacked around a great fire kindled in the middle of the farmyard: for in this mountainous country, the night dew is icy, even in the height of summer.

Troopers, seated upon ploughs and harrows, which they had dragged towards the fire, smoked, conversed, or sang some song of the barracks; others having taken off their doublets, rubbed down their horses which were tied up by their headstalls secured to nails in the walls, their horse-gear lay scattered about here and there.

These soldiers belonged to the regiment of Saint Sernin; they wore a green uniform laced with white wool, with scarlet waistcoat and trousers, and jack-boots with silver spurs.

The kitchen presented also a very animated scene. A great fire blazed on the hearth; the farmer's female servants, trembling, waited on the dragoons who sat at table. Although this was a Saturday, a day of abstinence, these Catholic soldiers, these booted missionaries, as they were called, very indifferent to the precepts of their Church, did honour, gaily, to the substantial remains of the farmer's supper. A quarter of lamb which was roasting for the supper of their chiefs, announced that these were as little scrupulous as their soldiers.

The five troopers, of whom we spoke, on entering into the kitchen, were welcomed with curiosity.

"Well, Larose!" said one of the dragoons to the Brigadier, who appeared the chief of the new comers, "have you made a good day's sport? Have you tied one of these croaking crows to the tail of your horse?"

"Why no, a thousand devils! Warned by the noise, these ill birds had taken wing, but they left a carcase which they were picking at

without doubt, and what is worse—" But Larose interrupting himself, said: "Where is M. the Marquis?"

"He is upstairs with Captain Paul."

"Captain Poul! then these brigands of Miquelets are coming?" cried Larose, "I hope at least they will not make the dragoons of St. Sernin bivouac with such vermin."

"No, no, devil take it! They would steal the very nails out of our boots. They will bivouac outside."

"Well, I am hungry! wait for me, you people," said Larose. "I will return after speaking to the Marquis."

"Go, he is upstairs," said his comrade.

"Where the devil is that upstairs?" rejoined Larose. But noticing a female servant he took her round the waist, kissed her on the neck, and said, "you are paid beforehand; now tell me where my captain is, my pretty damned one."

Unhappily for the gallantry of the dragoon, he had addressed a venerable matron. Much incensed at his impertinence, she turned upon him, and showed a pale, austere, and wrinkled countenance.

"Confound the darkness of this den! One

cannot distinguish a screech-owl from a turtle-dove," cried Larose, wiping his mouth in disgust. Then he added, brutally pushing the poor woman forward with the end of his sabre, "Come, come, step out, old Huguenot, lead me to my captain, the Marquis of Florac."

The servant took a light, preceded the dragoon up a dark staircase, reached the landing-place, and opened the door of a room in which were the farmer, his wife, his son Gabriel, and his daughter Celeste.

This family answered the inquisitorial questions of the reverend Father Rouleau, a Capuchin friar, and secretary of the Arch-Priest of the Cevennes, the Abbe of Chayla. The Marquis of Florac, captain of the dragoons of St. Sernin, and Denis Paul, chief of a band of Miquelets, assisted at this examination.

The room in which this formidable tribunal held its sittings, was known in the family by the name of "the Room of God." For two generations, this part of the house had been dedicated to the guests whom chance led to the farm. All strangers who asked shelter, rich or poor, were, according to this pious tradition, received with the same comforts, with the same attention, and were lodged in this room, where,

the farmer, with a touching sentiment of hospitality, had collected the few articles of luxury in household furniture which he possessed.

The bed, with carved posts, was decorated with a valance and curtains of Flemish tapestry, whilst the other beds in the house were only covered simply with the serge of the country.

A large and excellent arm-chair, with cushions covered with Spanish leather, was reserved for the tired wayfarer. A walnut table well waxed, a chest of drawers carved with much richness, a *prie-dieu* placed near the bed, completed the furniture of this room. On the wide chimney-piece appeared two vases of freestone. Every morning, whether the room was tenanted or not, they were filled with flowers of the season.

Above the chimney-piece was read in large black letters, written on parchment, these verses.

"*Cast thy bread upon the waters: for thou shalt find it after many days.*"

"*Give alms of thy goods, and never turn thy face from any poor man; and then the face of the Lord shall not be turned away from thee.*"

A copper lamp, with three jets, gave light to the scene which we are about to describe.

Tancred, Marquis of Florac, a fine young man, who might have seen some five and twenty summers, dressed in a green doublet, laced with silver, lay half reclined on the bed. He rested his head carelessly on one of his hands; with the other he played with his shoulder-knots of white satin, embroidered with gold. As he mechanically balanced one of his legs, he tore, with the spurs of his jack-boots, the fine counterpane of Persian thread, which had been preserved intact for so many years. The handsome features of the captain announced *ennui*, fatigue, and impatience.

Denis Paul occupied the great leather arm-chair reserved for guests: very indifferent to the examination of the Protestants, he studied a line of march and military occupation, on a topographic map of Languedoc, which he had spread out on a corner of the table.

This guerilla chief, notorious for his ferocity, had served many European states; recently he had campaigned in Hungary against the Turks.* One would have thought, from his

* He was an officer of merit and reputation, a native of Velle-Dubert, near Carcassonne, who had served in his youth in Hungary and Germany, and who had distinguished himself in Piedmont against the insurgents, especially by cutting off

strange costume, that he had endeavoured to enchance the terrors of a personal appearance, already sufficiently menacing. Nearly all the articles of his dress, and of his military accoutrements, were the spoil of enemies whom he had slain in fight. By his side, placed upon the table, appeared a heavy steel cap, behind which hung a web of chain-mail, shaped to guard the neck. This species of casque had been taken by Paul from a Circassian, who fought in the ranks of the Turks.

His broad and ponderous Armenian sabre,

the head of Barbaraga their chief, during the late wars. His lofty and active frame, his warlike look, his hoarse voice, his ardent and austere nature, his bloodstained and neglected dress, the maturity of his age, his proved courage, his habitual taciturnity, the length and weight of his Armenian sabre, rendered him formidable. Therefore it was impossible to choose a fitter man to bring these rebels to order. He rode his Spanish charger, on which he was accustomed to sit with his legs doubled up, so that he was able to spring forward to the ears of his charger, or to throw himself back to its croup, when he wanted to give or shun a mortal blow. (Fanaticism renewed 11. 1. by L'Ouvreleiul, a priest, Avignon, 1704.) "Paul was an old officer, whom M. de Baville had drawn to the Cevennes. with his company of Miquelets. He was tall, a man of head and courage. indefatigable. severe, cruel. and intrepid." (The History of Fanaticism, by Brueys, vol. 1. Utrecht, 1737.)

with a silver sheath and a Damascus blade, was the trophy of his victory over a Turkish Emir, whom he had killed in single combat. His rich Toledo dagger had been taken by him in Flanders from a captain of Lansquenets; his long pistols had belonged to Barbaraga, the chief of the *Barbéts* in the war of Piedmont; finally, it was from an Imperialist general that he had taken the iron corslet and the damasked gorget which he carried, after the ancient fashion, over his old buff coat, whose sleeves were hideously stained with human blood. It seemed the bloody frock of a butcher of the shambles. His big boots, of Cordova leather, whose long spurs were blackened by use, almost hid his scarlet trousers, for they reached to the middle of his thighs.

His short hair, cut close and bushy, was of an ardent red, as well as his beard, his eyebrows, and his moustaches. He had been blinded in one eye by the thrust of a lance; his other eye, of a clear and glassy blue, became suffused with blood at the least movement of passion. His nose was thick and fleshy. A broad scar, of a livid violet colour furrowed his brow, deeply wrinkled by age and the fatigues of war. Denis Paul was then

about fifty years of age, tall, bony, and of a ghastly thinness; the forefinger was wanting to one of his large, hairy, and sinewy hands. Paul had lost this finger by the results of a frightful torture. Being taken prisoner by the Turks, they sought to compel him to give details as to the position of the Imperial army: he refused. In order to force him to speak, the Turks put lighted matches under his finger, which slowly consumed the flesh to the very bone, without extorting one sign of weakness from this indomitable man. Struck with so much heroism, and well assured that torments would extract nothing from him, the Turks set him at liberty.

Without religious belief or restraint of any kind, impious, of implacable ferocity as well as of blind courage, of a will of iron, commanding his troop of bandits by the ascendancy of courage, such was Captain Denis Paul, charged, conjointly with the Marquis of Florac, with supporting the execution of the new edicts which applied to all the Protestants the penalties decreed against the relapsed.

The Capuchin Rouleau wore the costume of his order; he was young, pale; a black and clear beard shaded his chin.

Before this monk stood Jerome Cavalier, his wife, and his two children.

The features of the Protestant farmer revealed not the slightest fear; they were expressive of a noble and resolute calmness.

His wife did not share his confidence; trembling and with her eyes bathed in tears, she held him by the hand whilst Celeste and Gabriel pressed to her side in terror.

When Larose entered, his captain said to him, "Well, did you take them?"

"No, M. Le Marquis; they heard us coming, and took themselves off like a flight of bats; but they were assembled at the foot of the Cross of Blood as M. le Marquis was informed. Whilst Peter Louffet and Leroux gave them chase on the heath. I alighted with the Lorrainer and we found hung up to the Cross the carcass of a wolf half-devoured."

"Sacrilege!" cried the Capuchin with horror.

"What then?" said the young captain drily.

"After finding the carcass, M. le Marquis, the Lorrainer said to me, 'Brigadier Larose, the night is so clear that I think I can read writing on the Cross.' To make sure I struck a light, I set on fire a sprig of fern, and I read

written over the wolf on the arms of the Cross. 'So perish the Archpriest of Baal;' they had written *ball* with two *a's*, the savages!" said Larose by way of parenthesis, and shrugging his shoulders, 'So perish the ravening wolves!' I thought at first that it was very stupid to call M. L' Abbé an Archpriest of balls, for I believe M. l' Abbé incapable of indulging himself in the least minuet, and there was Mat—?"

"These words were written on the cross, 'So perish the Archpriest of Baal!'" asked the Capuchin with indignation, interrupting the sentence.

"Yes your Reverence; but I believe M. l' Abbé incapable—"

"Enough, enough," said the monk imposing silence on the soldier.

Then turning to the Protestant, he said to him. "You hear, you hear! And it was to become an accomplice of this abominable and sacrilegious crime that your son has doubtless absented himself this night.

"It is true that my son is absent, sir, but nothing proves that he is an accomplice of this action."

"Then where is he? Why on our arrival did you tell us that he was in his room?"

"Because I believed so, sir."

"For a long time the Lieutenant has kept his eyes upon you and your son," said the Capuchin.

After some minutes of silence he took out of one of the pockets of his cassock a little book containing, doubtless, some secret information relative to this Protestant family, and he added as he turned over the leaves:

"You have attended the meetings forbidden by the King's edict?"

"Yes, sir."

"You have given refuge to Brossou before he received at Montpellier the punishment of his detestable heresy?"

"The door of my house will never be shut to one who demands shelter."

"Your father served in the religious war under the Duke of Rohan, during the rebellion of that nobleman? He has carried arms against the King's troops?"

"Yes, sir, my father was wounded on the 'day of the Reapers.'"

"Your grandfather also shared in the Calvinist insurrection which was headed by the Prince of Condé?"

"Yes sir," said the old man with a sigh, my

grandfather died at his side in the plain of Coutras.'

"*Peste!*" said the Marquis, "this is at least a frank and hardy race of rebels; but you, my good Huguenot, since the revocation of the Edict of Nantes, have you never hid behind a furze bush to shoot down a poor, straggling soldier like a hare on her form?"

"My soul is pure of all baseness, my hands are clear of blood, sir. When the King our master revoked the rights which his ancestor had recognized, when our Churches were shut up, I went to hear the words of our Ministers in the woods or the mountains. If that is a crime I avow it and pride myself therein."

"The edict issued this year by His Majesty proclaims that "*there are no longer any Protestants in his Kingdom,*" (said the Capuchin), "all are considered as converted. Those who have continued the exercise of their religion since this edict are considered as relapsed, and consequently subjected to the penalties decreed against the relapsed."

"I have supported every persecution without complaint," answered the old man, "but they have never shaken my faith. The King considers me as converted. I am not; I have

never abjured my religion; I say it loudly, I wish to die and I will die in the faith of my fathers."

To understand all the atrocity of the words of the Capuchin, which were fully in conformity with the spirit and letter of the King's edicts, we must cite the preamble of the law, which condemned to the punishment of relapsed heretics, all the Protestants who declared that they wished to adhere to their religion, whether they had made abjuration or not.

The stay which those of the religion falsely called reformed, or who are born of religionist parents, have made in our kingdom, since we have abolished therein all exercise of the said religion, is a more than sufficient proof that they have embraced the Catholic, Apostolic, and Roman religion, without which they would neither have been permitted nor tolerated within the limits of the said kingdom.*

* Collection of the edicts, proclamations, and decrees against those of the religion falsely called reformed. Paris 1714.*

* It was at the very moment that these terrible edicts were published, and put in rigorous execution throughout France, that the well-known Bossuet, Bishop of Meaux, wrote the

Thus the Protestants who tried to leave the kingdom were condemned to the galleys or to death.* If they remained in France, this compulsory stay was taken advantage of against them, for the purpose of considering them converted; and when they formally declared that they wished to live and die in their religion, they were condemned, as relapsed heretics, to all the frightful punishments denounced against those, who having once abjured heresy, returned to it again.

Such monstrosities need no commentary.

following words in a pastoral letter, addressed to the converted Protestants of his diocese. "Not one of you hath suffered violence, either in his person or his goods. So far have you been from suffering torments that you have not so much as heard them mentioned. I hear other bishops say the same. But for you, my brethren, I say nothing to you, but what you can say as well as I. You have returned peaceably to us, you know it." *Ubi solitudinem faciunt pacem appellant.* The only historical parellel to this declaration, is the inscription of "Liberty, Fraternity, Equality," which formed the preamble of every mandate of tyrrany and massacre thundered forth by the sanguinary representatives of the People in the worst days of the French Convention. *Note by the Translator.*

† Decree of the 26th of April, 1686, against the refugee Religionists, Decree of the 12th. October, 1687, substituting the punishment of death to that of the galleys, against the abettors of the escape of the newly converted. (Collection, &c.)

Let us return to the examination of the Protestant farmer.

Captain Paul had, since the commencement of this scene, given frequent marks of impatience, striking the table with violence, he cried out with a hoarse and hollow voice:—

"Send this babbler to the *ceps*, your Reverence, and squeeze his ankle-bones till he tells us where his son is. Let us have done with this, for supper waits, and I am hungry."

The Capuchin implored, with a gesture, the captain's patience, and continued the examination.

"Have you conformed to the edicts which order the newly-converted Religionists to bring up their children in the Apostolic and Roman religion?"

"I tell you again, sir, that I am not converted; my children shall follow no other religion than that of their fathers."

"The religion falsely called reformed is abolished in France; you inhabit France; therefore you cannot profess a religion prohibited by the King's edicts. Take care; by pretending to adhere to your belief, you avow yourself *relapsed*, since, according to the terms of the edict, your stay in the kingdom implies

your conversion. So, by declaring that you have educated, and will continue to educate your children in your detestable heresy, you expose yourself to the most severe punishments. Reflect well. I will read to you the words of the edict of the 13th December, 1698." and the Capuchin read to the farmer the following passage.*

"We order fathers and other newly converted persons who are charged with the education of children, to bring them before the Bishops, or other Directors of our Missions, at such times as they shall appoint in the course of their visitations, in order to give account to them of the instruction which they have received touching the Catholic religion, and we order our justices of the peace to make all orders, and to take all steps necessary for the execution of our will in this regard."

Then the Capuchin slowly read out what followed, looking at the farmer from time to time with a severe eye.

"And we order the newly-converted, who shall neglect to satisfy our orders relative to

* From the "Collection" already cited.

the Catholic education of their children, or who shall have the temerity to oppose them in any manner, to be punished by fine or other *severer penalty*, according to the circumstances of the case."

"You see a *severer penalty* may be inflicted," said the Capuchin. "You deserve already a heavy punishment for not having educated your children as the King directs. Do you wish to expose yourself to a fresh punishment by persisting in your impiety?"

"I can only repeat to you that I have never abjured my religion, and that my children will imitate my example."

"A good gallows or the galleys is what you deserve," cried Denis Paul.

"You persist in your purpose to pervert and corrupt these young minds by plunging them in the odious heresy of Calvin?" said the Capuchin.

"I persist in my determination to educate my children according to the religion of my fathers."

"Then your children will be taken from you," said the Capuchin.

"Take away my children!" cried the unhappy mother, pressing them to her breast

with a movement of terror. Then she added, with an air at once incredulous and supplicatory, "But, no! that is impossible!"

"The Edict is precise," said the Capuchin.

And turning over the leaves of his terrible book, he read what follows:

'"Louis, by the Grace of God, King of France and Navarre, to all present and to come, greeting. Whereas we have decreed, by our Edict given at Fontainebleau, that the children of our subjects, who have made profession of the Reformed Religion, shall be educated in the Catholic, Apostolical, and Roman faith, we consider it at present necessary to procure with the same application the salvation of those who were born before the passing of this law, and to supply in this manner the default of their parents, who are unhappily given up to heresy, and who could only make a bad use of the authority which Nature has given them for the education of their children—'"

"O, my children, my poor children, do you hear what they say of your father and mother, who love you so much, who have always brought you up in the fear of God?" cried Madame Cavalier, covering Celeste and Gabriel with the tenderest caresses.

"It belongs to God alone to read our hearts," said the Farmer, calmly and gravely.

"Silence!" cried the Capuchin, and he continued:

"'For these and other causes thereunto moving us, we have declared and proclaimed, and do by these presents, signed with our hand, declare and proclaim our will and pleasure that within eight days after the publication of this, our Edict, in our bailiwicks &c., all the children of such of our relapsed subjects as shall continue to make profession of the Religion, falsely termed Reformed, from the age of five to that of sixteen years, shall be placed, under the direction of our attorneys, and such of our subjects as have superior jurisdiction, in the hands of their Catholic relatives to be brought up in the Catholic religion—'

"Have you any Catholic relatives?"

"None, sir," answered the Farmer; whilst his wife waited with an excruciating anxiety the end of the Capuchin's speech.

He continued:

"In that case the Edict is precise;" and he read:

"'We will, that in case these children have no Catholic relative, that they be placed in the

hands of such persons as shall be appointed by the judges, in order to be educated in the Apostolic, Catholic, and Roman religion.'

"Then," shutting his book, the Capuchin added, "since you have no Catholic relatives, the Church, the common mother of all Christians, will snatch these children from the heresy with which you wish to infect them. Your son and daughter will follow us to Montpelier. They will there be placed in a convent where they will abjure your damnable errors; as for yourself, you also will follow us to Montpelier where you will have to account for your obstinate rebellion to the King's orders."

Madame Cavalier, pale and delirious, could not believe what she heard; she cast herself at the feet of the Capuchin.

At this instant the door was opened violently; a servant rushed in, crying out:

"Madam! madam! your mother is dying. The coming of the dragoons has occasioned a dreadful change in her."

"My mother! my mother!" cried the wife of the Farmer, arising and rushing to the door followed by her children.

"Stop!" said the Capuchin, with a voice of command. "Monseigneur the Arch-Priest must

try once more to snatch this soul from her final impenitence, and to lead it back to the bosom of the true Church."

Then turning to the Captain he said:

"Be pleased, M. le Marquis, to give orders that no one leaves this room; I am going to find Monseigneur the Arch-Priest."

"Ah, Chamillard! Chamillard!* what an ignoble office you thrust upon me," cried the Marquis, with impatience; "if you give me, after all, those colours in the Musketeers, I think I *shall* have paid dear for them."

Then, addressing Larose, he said:

"Put two sentinels at this door, and let no one go out."

Larose disappeared.

"Monsieur!" cried the Farmer, with a sorrowful indignation, "it is in the name of our dying mother, it is in the name of the most sacred rights of humanity that I protest against these outrages."

"But, my God, you know that my mother is dying," cried Madame Cavalier, in heart-rending accents, "you know well that we must go to her."

* The French Minister of War at that period.—Translator.

The Marquis left abruptly, as if he had been struck with horror at this scene. Denis Paul followed him, saying with a merciless brutality.

"At last, I smell supper."

At this moment, two dragoons appeared at the door of the room.

The Capuchin walked out, keeping his face towards the prisoners, and making an imperious gesture to Jerome Cavalier.

The Farmer wanted to follow; but the troopers crossing their carbines, prevented his going out, and shut the door.

"Oh, my mother! my mother! perhaps at this last hour you call for your daughter!" cried Madame Cavalier sobbing, and kneeling in the midst of the room.

"My God, my God, have pity on us!" cried her two children, throwing themselves on her neck.

Jerome Cavalier alone stood erect in the midst of his despairing family.

His austere figure betrayed the most sorrowful emotions. But when he saw all at once his eldest son, John Cavalier, appear at the open window and spring into the room, he could not contain a cry of surprise.

CHAPTER VII.

THE ESCAPE.

THE great walnut tree, to the top of which John Cavalier had climbed to escape from the dragoons, rose to a level with the windows of "The Room of God". Cavalier was easily enabled to leap from the boughs into the room whose windows, having been open, had allowed him to hear and see everything.

After having bolted the door from within, he said to his father sorrowfully:

"Pardon me, father. My absence this night has aggravated the misfortune; but, before telling you everything, let us think of the present moment. There is not an instant to lose."

"My mother is dying far from me! They wish to take your brother and sister from us!"

cried Madame Cavalier, wringing her hands in despair.

"I know it all, mother," said Cavalier, "we must prevent that outrage."

"By what means, in the name of Heaven?" said the weeping mother.

Cavalier pointed to the window.

"Celeste and Gabriel are both light and active; they will follow me upon the tree, from which we will get down near the wall; the outer gate is not guarded; we shall soon be in the woods."

"In the woods!" said Madame Cavalier. "And where will you take these poor children?"

"To M. du Serre, of the Chateau of Mas-Arribas."

"Oh, no, no, not there!" cried Madame Cavalier with terror. "Strange, sinister things are said to take place there. Once more I will not entrust my children to that man."

Cavalier looked at his mother in astonishment.

"But my father will tell you that M. du Serre and his wife are good Protestants. I entreat you, mother, do not hesitate; the instants are precious; these people may return. Is it not true, father?"

The old man reflected some moments, and said to his wife with an accent of authority which admitted of no reply.

"John is right; his brother and sister will be safe with the glass-maker; besides there is no alternative. These merciless men will tear my children from me. These men have the King's will and power with them. We can only resign ourselves, and protest by tears and silence."

"Resign ourselves!" said Cavalier, with a burst of impetuosity which he could not check, and which drew upon him a severe look from his father. Then he added: "Yes, we must resign ourselves, still resign ourselves."

"O, my God! my God! to see them no more," said Madame Cavalier, sobbing. "My Gabriel!" (and she covered him with kisses). "My Celeste!" (and she pressed her to her breast).

The two unhappy children, pale, and terrified, answered the caresses of their mother with tears.

"You will see them again, my mother; you will see them again!" cried Cavalier. "As soon as the dragoons are gone, M. Du Serre will bring them back. But time presses."

Despite his apparent calm, the farmer made painful efforts to preserve his self-command, in the midst of this agonizing scene; his children approached him to embrace them, he said to them with a commanding voice, but with profound emotion—

"Come hither, my poor little ones—let your father bless you! If he sees you no more, he will die with less fear, as to your future condition, for God will not abandon those whom a father has blessed."

"What do you say?" cried his wife.

"My father!" cried Cavalier.

But the old man, commanding silence with an imperious gesture, stretched his trembling hands over the heads of his children; then, raising Celeste and Gabriel, he pressed them repeatedly to his breast, while two big tears flowed down his venerable cheeks.

Cavalier who had leant out of the window to see if all was quiet without, cried—

"It rains, the weather is dark and favorable;—mother, we must go."

After an agonizing farewell, Celeste and Gabriel, guided by Cavalier, sprang lightly upon the boughs of the walnut tree, and soon reached the ground.

The rain fell on the leaves in large drops, the sky was black, the night was dark. The fire, which the troopers had lit in the court-yard, cast now but a pale reflection. The soldiers were asleep.

Cavalier, Celeste, and Gabriel quitted the farm, without being heard, and followed a hollow way—which led to the woods of Aygoal; the chateau of the gentleman glass-maker, was built on the heights of this mountain, one of the extinct volcanos of Languedoc.

After an hour's walking, the three fugitives arrived at the foot of the steep slopes, where the skirts of the wood commenced. The darkness was intense; Cavalier, fearing to lose his way before reaching the Chateau, took a road which led to Ephraim's hut, for the purpose of asking the keeper to guide them to the gate of du Serre.

"Courage, Gabriel! courage, my little Celeste!" said Cavalier, to his brother and sister; "we shall soon reach Ephraim's hut, he will show us the way to the chateau; you will rest there after all your fatigue, poor children."

"We shall see you again soon, shall we

not, brother; as well as our father and mother?" said Gabriel, restraining the tears which were ready to fall.

"Yes, yes my pretty Gabriel! very soon."

"Brother," said Celeste, in a low voice, "brother, I am very cold, I can hardly walk."

"Oh! the day of vengeance will come perhaps!" murmured Cavalier, with rage, —then taking his sister in his arms, he said to her kindly, "come, Celeste, come poor dear, we shall soon arrive."

The fugitives perceived in the distance a luminous point, frequently hidden by the branches of the trees which the wind waved in every direction.

Having reached the dwelling of the keeper, Cavalier left the two children at the foot of an oak, and went forward alone.

This dwelling, rudely constructed of large fragments of rock, and of stones, cemented together with clay, was covered with thatch; one solitary window, or rather a loop hole, made in the wall, gave a passage to the light which had guided Cavalier.

A torch, made of the branch of a pitch-pine, fixed to the wall in the round hole of an iron

skewer, gave light to the interior of the hut. Ephraim shared it with his horse, Lepidoth, and his two dogs, Raab and Bâlak!

The walls, washed with a sort of chalk, were nearly completely covered with inscriptions, borrowed from the Bible, especially from the dark and terrible visions of the Apocalypse of St. John. The arms of the Forest-keeper were seen suspended over a rude chimney-piece. At the farther end of the cabin, the horse rested upon a scanty bed of fern.

Ephraim was seated near the chimney, a block of wood served for his seat, his two dogs slept at his feet; he read with meditation an old Bible placed upon his knees.

Not far from the chimney was his bed, a long case of firwood filled with fresh heather. He designed it for his coffin.

This man, whose imagination had been powerfully excited by fanaticism and by a life of solitude, believed that he would be enabled to detach his soul yet more from terrestrial bonds by keeping always before his eyes the coffin in which he expected to rest till time should be no more.

A violent gust of wind shook the old hut to its foundations. Ephraim, finding in it the

subject of an application from his reading, cried out reading aloud the the passages from his Bible.

"'*Sound an alarm in my holy mountain, let all the inhabitants of the land tremble: for the day of the Lord cometh, for it is nigh at hand. A day of darkness and of gloominess, a day of clouds and thick darkness.** . . . *A day of the trumpet and alarm against the fenced cities and against the high towers.*'"†

Cavalier knocked at the door, crying out—

"Brother Ephraim open, it is I."

At these words, the dogs awoke, and barked furiously. Ephraim made sure by a glance through the loophole, that it was Cavalier who asked shelter, and then opened the door.

The two children entered with their brother. The terror which Ephraim inspired them, was great; they clung to one another, casting glances of fear about them.

In a few words, Cavalier acquainted the forester with the arrival of the Arch-priest at Andèol and the threats of the Capuchin who wished to carry Celeste and Gabriel to a convent.

Ephriam, approving the resolutions of

* Joel. † Zephaniah.

Cavalier, proposed to him to set out instantly so as to reach the Chateau of Mas-Arribas before daybreak.

When the two children were somewhat warmed, they all set out for the chateau.

During their passage through the woods, which was long and difficult, Cavalier said in a low voice to Ephraim:

"I know not why my mother was afraid to trust my brother and sister to Du Serre. She says that strange things take place at the chateau."

After some minutes' silence, Ephraim answered him with a sombre look, by repeating this passage of the Apocalypse: "There are visions. '*For they are the spirits of devils, working miracles, which go forth unto the kings of the earth, and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God.*'"

"What do you mean, Ephraim?" asked Cavalier. "You know Du Serre better than I do. On your soul, can I trust him with these children?"

"Du Serre is a faithful servant of the Lord. If he has visions in his castle, it is because he is visited by God; Samuel also had visions. The goatherds of the mountains say that white

phantoms and blue fires sometimes appear on the top of his tower. The witch of Endor also made phantoms appear," added the Forester with a mysterious fervour.

Cavalier had no faith in visions, but the singular words of Ephraim recalled to his recollection the strange reports which were current in reference to the gentleman glass-maker; still, as in the frequent relations which he had held with Du Serre, whether at Geneva or Andèol, Cavalier had always found him of an open and honest character; he thought that he ought to attach no importance to the strange answers of the Forest-keeper; besides, there was no time to seek another asylum for the children; the Chateau was near St. Andéol, and Cavalier could see his brother and sister every day.

The dawn began to break when the fugitives reached the last landing-place of the labyrinth of rocks in which the chateau of Mas-Arribas stood, alone.

As the morning twilight grew more transparent, the wild and frightful site of this ancient fortress became more discernible. Frightful peaks, bottomless tarns and half closed abysses surrounded it; all attested that this mountain

had been shattered by some great volcanic convulsion.

Pines and chesnut trees grew vigorously on this calcined soil; everywhere the horizon was bounded by an ocean of sombre verdure whence emerged at intervals the point of a rock.

In the distance, the slopes of Aygoal formed by a sudden dip, a wide vista; there was seen, through the morning mists, a green and fertile plain, surrounded by a river, it was the Hort-Diou, the little Canaan, that the two children had quitted during the night, the peaceful home to which they cast back a look of despair.

The castle was only accessible by a drawbridge thrown over a deep precipice.

Ephraim rang a great bell fastened to a post; a servant dressed in black appeared at a narrow window, he asked what they wanted. Ephraim and Cavalier named themselves, the drawbridge was lowered and Du Serre appeared to receive his guests.

When Cavalier had acquainted him with the subject of his visit, an indefinable expression of joy lit up the eyes of Du Serre.

Doubtless to reassure the children he sent for his wife.

Though she had, like her husband, a remark-

able air of austerity, she succeeded in dispelling a little the fears of Celeste and Gabriel who, after having cried much and tenderly embraced their brother, saw him depart with the keenest affliction.

Before returning to the farm, where the dragoons had not as yet perceived the escape of the two young Cevennese, we must give some details concerning the Arch-priest of the Cevennes, one of the most important personages in this history.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE ARCH-PRIEST OF THE CEVENNESE.

THE Arch-priest of the Cevennes, to whom the Capuchin was proceeding in order to inform him of the condition of the mother of Cavalier and the result of his examination of the Protestant family, had retired to a small room in the farm.

A copper lamp placed in a niche hardly lit up the white and bare walls of this retreat. In the corner was a straw mat which the Arch-priest always carried with him, when he travelled, and on which he slept in his clothes.

This austere man, dressed in a long black robe, prayed, kneeling before a little wooden cross placed in a niche above the lamp.

The broad forehead of the Abbé was bald and prominent; his figure pale, his strongly

marked features seemed cut in marble; they had something death-like and sepulchral in their expression. Fasts and mortifications had imprinted on his face the traces of profound sufferings; his look of terrible majesty and sorrow recalled the inspirations of the sombre genius of Michael Angelo.

Sometimes, when he was alone the Arch-priest was overwhelmed by infinite sorrow. Then from the ruthless Apostle armed with a flaming sword he became the sinner imploring grace and forgiveness from Heaven.

Then his large dark eyes were dimmed with tears, his pale cheeks became feebly colored, he pressed his hands to his forehead and cried out, "My God! my God, have pity on me for my sorrow is great, great as my fear!"

Francis de Langlade du Chayla, Prior of Laval, inspector of the omissions of Gevaudan, Arch-priest of the Cevennes, then aged about fifty-three, belonged to a noble and martial family of Languedoc.

The youngest of his house, he had, against his will, been destined to the Church. Of an inflammable temperament, gifted with one of those ardent, restless spirits which never receive a sort of bitter satisfaction except in the midst

of difficulties and dangers; the Abbé du Chayla, on entering the seminary, was obliged to stifle within himself that thirst of great events which consumed him.

During eight years he resisted, during eight years he sought to deceive, by the most extensive and profound studies, the devouring activity of his mind and the impetuous outbursts of his character which impelled him to great things. When he compared his career to his tastes and impulses, he saw that his future condition would be in a constant opposition with his secret vocation; by that interior revelation which rarely deceives superior intellects, he felt that he would have been a great captain.

The courage, the energy of will, and the inflexibility which he always displayed in the course of his spiritual missions, his absolute want of feeling in the use of the most terrible means to ensure the triumph of his faith, proved that the heroic and essentially militant character of the Abbé du Chayla would have been magnificently developed in the fiery atmosphere of battles.

When he had attained his twenty-fifth year, not being able to combat with terrestrial arms, but more eager than ever to encounter dangers,

the Abbé du Chayla attached to the seminary of Foreign Missions, was sent as a Missionary to Siam.

He arrived in the East Indies at the most trying moment. Incensed at the aggressive zeal of some of the predecessors of the Abbé, the King of Siam had put many of them to death. The entrance to his States was forbidden to Christians under the severest penalties. Elevated by so many dangers, ambitious of the palm of martyrdom, the Abbé du Chayla eluded the vigilance of the Siamese; at the risk of his life, he preached the Catholic religion amongst this people, and quickened the seeds of faith, which the first Missionaries had sowed in the minds of many of the idolaters.

Conversions became rapid and numerous, his austerity and courage excited the admiration of the Indians. Certain traitors gave up the Abbé to the soldiers of the Governor of Bankof; despite his character as a French Missionary, which should have protected him from all ill usage, the Abbé was put to the torture in the most horrible manner.

He caried all his life the scars of these fearful wounds; he had been torn with red hot pincers, to make him deny his God; the intrepid

Missionary wearied the ferocity of his executioners.

Abandoned to the care of a Paria, the Abbé recovered his health; his ancient zeal revived with it. M. le Chevalier de Chaumont, sent as an ambassador to Siam by Louis XIV., arrived at this conjuncture.

The Indian King disavowed the persecutions which the French Missionary had suffered; threw all the odium upon the Governor, and to appease the resentment of M. De Chaumont, gave the torturer of the Abbé to the elephants.

M. du Chayla, ordered to Siam, received there a letter from the superior of the foreign missions which directed him to return to France. Louis the XIV. meditated at that time the promulgation of the edicts which followed the revocation of the edict of Nantes.

Pere La Chaise, the confessor of the French monarch, felt the necessity of assembling in France all the priests gifted with a firm and resolute spirit in order to employ them in the completion of this formidable work. The Abbé du Chayla had given too many proofs of courage and energy not to have attracted his notice. On his arrival in France he was appointed Inspector

of the missions of Gevaudan and Arch-priest of the Cevennes.

Invested with an almost arbitrary power, he displayed an unrivalled zeal and activity. After having held long conferences with M. de Baville the Lieutenant of Languedoc, and with M. de Broglie the Commander of the Forces, he concerted, so to speak, the plan of a spiritual campaign against the Fanaticism, as the Reformed Religion was then called.

The different dioceses, more or less infected with Calvinism, were marked out; the priests of each town, village, and parish were charged with the duty of affording secret written information as to the opinions, and religious tendencies of their parishioners.

Armed with these reports, the Arch-priest began his terrible mission; clothed with the most absolute powers, he removed such of the parochial clergy as appeared deficient in zeal. In the dioceses where there were no convents, he raised, under the direction of nuns and monks of his own choice, schools destined for the education of Huguenot children who, according to the last edict of the King of which we have spoken, were to be brought up in the Catholic

religion. He put into rigorous execution the dreadful ordinances concerning Protestant Ministers and religious assemblies. A pastor surprised in the performance of his duties was sent to Montpellier by the Abbè du Chayla, and he was burnt alive. Many capital executions were inflicted on Protestants settled within the circuit of the Arch-priest. He delivered them with his own hands to the secular authority, and showed himself always the declared partizan of the severest measures.*

* "The Abbe du Chayla utilized hisown apprenticeship of suffering; and being himself an inventor of torments, enlarged the science of judicial torture by the application of instruments hitherto unknown which he imported from the Indies or which he discovered by the effect of his own imagination. Men spoke with horror of split reeds which this ruthless Missionary thrust under the nails of his victims, of iron pincers with which he tore out the hairs of their heads, their eyebrows and their eyelids by main force, of greased matches with which he surrounded their fingers and which being lighted made each hand a burning lamp with five jets of flame, of a whirling chair revolving on a pivot in which the wretch who refused to be converted, was secured and turned round with such rapidity that he became at length insensible, and finally of machines devised for securing prisoners on their transport from town to town which were so contrived that they could neither sit nor stand in them."

Life of Cavalier p. 39.

So that even the panegyrists of the Abbé du Chayla, while they acknowledged his fervent piety, could not help blaming his inflexibility.

"The faith of the new converts, (they said), was still infirm and tottering; he had not been sufficiently tender with frail vessels; his zeal was mixed with too much bitterness, and this conduct, while it outraged their feelings, had led the Religionists to shake off a yoke which was not made sufficiently light."*

According to the Abbé's own view of the case, entertaining as he did a profound conviction that the Reformed Religion was "an immortal poison," which destroyed the souls of Protestants and of their proselytes for all eternity, we may comprehend, without excusing them, the violent means which he always put in action for the eradication of heresy.

By this man who imported his martial instincts into the exercise of his religious profession, the abstract question of human feeling was never considered for a moment.

* Bruey's History of the Fanaticism of our own Times.

In the same manner that a general sacrifices half his army in cold blood in order to assure the safety of the rest by a useful victory, the Arch-priest sacrificed, without remorse or scruple, all the obstinate Huguenots in order to assure the triumph of eternal truth and the recovery of the Christian Religion from the dangerous shocks which it had received from Calvinism.

But nevertheless at times, this man of elevated intellect, irreproachable morality, and a heroic devotion to the cause of God, descended into his own soul.

And then, reflecting upon the inflexible severity which he had invariably exercised, he asked himself if mercy would not have been preferable to rigour. Then he felt himself pressed down under the weight of unimaginable terrors. The torrents of Protestant blood shed upon the wheel, and at the stake, seemed to rise up against him. He heard the shrieks of his victims. Terrified like a judge, who fears that he has condemned the innocent, he fell on his knees; in fervent prayer he besought the Almighty to enlighten him.

The sanguinary precedents of Sacred History

no longer appeared sufficient to justify his severities.

But God remained silent, and left to the disposition of the free will of the Priest its own fearful responsibility.

Then this man, seized with a horrid doubt, said to himself in his terror: "What am I, just or criminal? At the great day of judgment shall I stand on the right hand or the left? Shall I be condemned or absolved for having suffered the effusion of so much blood, for having pointed out so many victims to the sword of the secular magistrate? Without doubt, I act in obedience to a temporal authority; without doubt it is the edicts of the King of France, of Louis XIV. which command all these massacres, but, if they are unjust, ought I not to stand between him and his people? But, (continued the Arch-priest) perhaps indulgence is as hurtful to the faith as severity. Though you cut down a tree to the level of the ground, while the roots exist, it throws out always strong and lively shoots; it is the root of heresy which must be extirpated, and that alas! cannot be done without fearful wounds."

The Abbé du Chayla was plunged in one of his dark reveries, when the Capuchin entered his apartment with an air of respect.

"Monseigneur," said he, "a female heretic is dying in this house."

"Is she informed of the new edicts against the relapsed?"

"I do not know, father."

"Go and acquaint both her and the people of this house of them."

The Capuchin went out.

He caused himself to be conducted to the room in which the mother of Madame Cavalier was dying. He summoned there solemnly the maids and those labourers who remained on the farm; then he read in a loud voice the passage of the edict of the 29th. April 1686, which the new orders of the King rendered applicable to all Protestants.

"We have said and do by these presents declare that if any of our subjects of either sex who shall have made abjuration of the belief falsely called Reformed, falling ill, shall refuse the Parochial or other Priests to receive the sacraments of the Church, and declare that they will persist to die in the Reformed Religion, in case the said sick persons shall

recover their health, proceedings shall be instituted against them before our Judges, and they shall be condemned, if males, to do public penance, to be condemned to the galleys for life, and if females to perpetual seclusion. As for the sick who shall have declared that they wish to persist in their religion and refused the sacraments of the Church, and who shall die in this unhappy disposition, we order that legal proceedings shall be instituted against their dead bodies and their memory, that they shall be dragged on a hurdle and flung into the nearest receptacle for carrion and rubbish, and their goods confiscated."*

The maids and labourers received the reading of this dreadful Edict with a low murmur of terror and despair.

The dying woman had the strength to raise herself in her bed, and to exclaim with a loud voice:

"These threats have not frightened me; I die faithful in the Lord."

Then, falling back on her pillow, she called for her daughter in anguish, and energetically repelled the importunities of the Capuchin who offered her the sacraments.

* See the Collection already cited.

The Reverend Father returned to give an account to the Arch-Priest of the result of his mission.

At this moment the Miquelets of Captain Paul entered the village.

CHAPTER IX.

THE MIQUELETS.

The little town of Saint Andéol, lately so quiet, offered on the morrow after the Arch-Priest's arrival the spectacle of a bivouac.

The presence of the Miquelets of Captain Paul had yet more augmented the tumult. This troop of ferocious and undisciplined irregulars, composed of natives of all nations, and especially of the mountaineers of Rousillon were encamped in the Place before the Church, at some distance from the dragoons of St. Sernin, for there was no great good intelligence between these two forces.

The costume of the Miquelets was not uniform; the greater part, in imitation of their Captain, were dressed in the spoil of their enemies; here was seen the red doublet of the

Piedmontese, there the blue and yellow frocks of the Imperialists, elsewhere the *cotte-hardie* of the Barbéts; a good number wore long undervests of a coarse woollen stuff of a brown colour, called *collitey* in Rousillon, with trousers of the same stuff, and a green wollen scarf round their waists. The only uniform article in their equipments was a belted knapsack and a short, rifled carbine, which the Miquelets, who were excellent marksmen, used by preference.

Some were covered with helmets, others with felt hats, and others with skull-caps; some wore cuirasses, corselets of mail, or simply gorgets; others wore a buff coat. Their offensive weapons were just as various: swords, daggers, sabres, battle-axes, each chose his own to his taste, and carried it hung to the belt of his knapsack. But all possessed a long, horn-handled knife or dirk, without which they never stirred, and which was often dyed with blood in their frequent quarrels. They were shod with hempen sandals, which appeared to them, without doubt, convenient for climbing mountains.

Knowing the superiority of the Miquelets in a war of guerillas and ambuscades, Messieurs

de Baville and de Broglie had especially chosen the Miquelets to support the mission of the Arch-Priest in the Cevennes.

The courage, the cruelty, the indefatigable activity of the Miquelets, and their ferocious appearance inspired the greatest terror in the country, and everywhere, on their march, they left behind them fatal memories of their transit.

It was eight o'clock in the morning, the Miquelets, encamped upon the principal Place in the township, waited the arrival of their Captain, and remained in the meanwhile under the orders of an old serjeant, surnamed by them Le Bon Larron;* this latter added to his duties as *factotum* of the Captain, whom he had followed, in his war-like peregrinations, the office of Treasurer and Quarter-master of the Company.

The Bon Larron had not received his name without a cause, and a very efficient one was needed to earn for him such a title among a band of scoundrels whose least crime was theft.

In fine, the Bon-Larron, by abbreviation

† Literally, The Good Thief.

Bon-Lar, carried even to a sort of monomania the passion of appropriating his neighbours' goods, not like his Captain, the intrepid Paul, by force of arms, but by stratagem, for the Thief, although an excellent shot, had no great liking to a close fight in an open country.

Recollecting the reputation of this vagabond for dishonesty, it appears at first hard to understand that the Captain should have invested him with the duties of Treasurer to the company. But it should be stated that this office did not involve the entrusting of any treasure to the hands of Master Bon-Lar.

The Miquelets, like the condottieri, engaged with their Captain for a given time, generally for two years. They received on entering into the company six months pay beforehand, called, in their slang, *priming*. The rest of their pay was given at the expiration of their engagement.

The Captain negotiated directly for the expenses of his troop with the Lieutenant of the Province, from whom he received the payment agreed upon. The Captain's profit then lay in hiring his company at a high rate of pay, and paying as little as possible. The Bon-Larron, the sworn tool of Captain Paul, was of eminent

assistance to him in attaining this result, whether by his *superior* style of keeping accounts, or by the advances at enormous interest which he made to the Miquelets. The Serjeant was also very useful to his Captain in regulating the expenses of his Commissariat. In an enemy's country they robbed, in a friend's they tried to rob also; if the orders were too severe they contented themselves with not paying for what they bought.

It was especially under the latter circumstances that the duties of Treasurer, confided to the Bon-Larron, became very important; the task of shunning or satisfying without payment, the creditors of the company, devolved upon him, for the company was always without a copper.

It must be owned that Master Bon-Lar showed great experience, and wonderful ability in this species of liquidation.

The exterior of Bon-Larron was unhappily but two well adapted to abet these rascalities. This man, a native of Mans, was forty years old; premature and venerable grey hairs appeared beneath his flapped felt hat, which he had stolen from a registrar, his landlord at Montpelier. A grey beard and moustache, no

less respectable, fell down to his large open collar, cut out of a shift stolen from his hostess at Mende. Finally his most respectable corporation cracked, in every direction, a buff doublet, and trousers of Segovia cloth, which he owed to the gratitude of his host at Alais, whom he had blinded o fone eye under pretence of curing him of opthalmia by means of a "*pharaminous*" prescription.

Add to this deceitful exterior, a smiling, fresh-coloured countenance, redolent of frankness and cordiality, a certain military bluntness, and you will have a sketch of Maître Lar, who passed for a great rascal even among this collection of scoundrels.

The Serjeant soon saw his Captain appear; he seemed in a transport of rage.

"Do you know the work they want us to do here?" cried Paul as soon as he saw his Serjeant.

"No, my worthy Captain," said Master Bon-Lar, with a voice of honey respectfully carrying his hand to his felt.

"They wish us to do the work of the executioner! If we were alone here I should not mind it, you know well that in my company of the Ukraine Carabineers, in the war. against

the Turks, there were twenty men who could beat the best hangman for flaying alive the sons of Mahom taken for spies by our vanguards."

"Do you need to tell me that, my worthy Captain? There were among the rest, Juzep the Bearded, and Tcherdyn the Black, who before Belgrade, and in pursuance of your orders, took off half the scalp of that *bostandgi*, and sent him in that state to Pacha Bey by way of example. It was impossible, upon my honour, to see a thing cleaner, or smarter done!"

"No doubt, no doubt," said Paul, with a sort of savage satisfaction, "but the matter now is, what do you think? dragging the dead body of an old woman on the hurdle?"

"Some Huguenot who died impenitent, doubtless," said the Serjeant.

"Yes, the mother of our hostess, who this night told the Arch-Priest and his monk to go to the devil, calling as loud as she could for a minister."

"A minister! well now, the good lady must have been out of her senses. A minister! but there is not one in all the Cevennes. She ought to have asked for a minister from the wheel or the stake, if the wheel or the stake could give them back. See the daughters of

Eve! always longing for the forbidden fruit," said the Serjeant.

"Whilst the Arch-Priest wished to take her confession and she refused, the old woman died, and her soul went *Eblis knows where*, as the Turks say."

"And to punish the old woman for damning herself, they are going to drag her body on the hurdle," said the Serjeant, shrugging his shoulders.

"Such is the Edict of the King; so be it, but thunder and massacre! it is not for brave, free companions like my Miquelets to harness themselves to such a load."

"At least when under Field-Marshal Rutter, our carabineers shot or flayed any one, they had two days full pay, the plunder of the patient, and a pint of the Marshal's own Rhenish," said the Serjeant, clacking his tongue against the roof of his mouth.

"To the devil with them! my Miquelets will have nothing to say to such a job," said Paul, after an instant's reflexion. "Let those puppets in laced doublets, whom they call the Dragoons of St. Sernin, take the duty. I will go and say so to that confounded Arch-Priest."

"And if he makes you, my worthy Captain?"

"Make who? *me*, Paul?" said the Guerilla with a smile of contempt; "I should soon have put the frontier between his will and mine."

The Serjeant shook his head with an air of doubt, and said to Paul:

"Listen, listen, Captain; the point of honour and delicacy are very fine things, but the pay is good here; hard money, down on the nail; your soldiers are paid thirty sous a day, and you give them nine, out of which we keep back ten for their food and dress which we give them a general authority to furnish themselves at other persons' expense. It is true that you have the generosity to leave them for their tobacco, wine, and the enjoyment of all the other pleasures of this life, the sou which they ought to add to their pay of nine sous to be quit with you; it is very generous in you, but this generosity does not quite ruin you, and—"

"Have you done? have you done?" cried Paul, in anger and impatience.

"One word more, my worthy Captain. At the rate all this goes on, it is probable that these animals of Religionists will be beaten

into kicking; now, if the clowns rebel, *vive Dieu!* besides our pay we cut our cloth to our own liking. These clod-hoppers live on nothing but chesnuts, and lay up like the devil. They have always some old louis d'or, or some old crowns hid in a pot, or the foot of a stocking; and, although you have no longer Juzep the Bearded, or Tcherdyn the Black in your company, you will always find among your Miquelets two handy fellows clever enough to know how to light a gun-match between the thumbs of these sheep-feeders to make them tell where the hen with the golden eggs lays, and that is only the small fry of our fishing-match. What fat contributions there will be to levy on these rich Huguenot shop-keepers! and the country gentlemen of the mountains! and the ministers! I have done, my worthy Captain, I have done," the Serjeant made haste to add. "Well, if you refuse to let your men give this old lady her last ride, and return to Rousillon, or go elsewhere, you will not find, believe me, the advantages which you have here, which you will have especially when you get orders to treat these districts more mercilessly than a conquered country: for they will revolt, we must hope it, Captain, they will revolt."

The objections of the Serjeant appeared to make some impression upon his Captain; he went to find his soldiers, followed by the Bon-Larron, who secretly applauded himself for having overcome the scruples of his Captain.

Now we will return to the Protestant farm so suddenly changed to an abode of mourning and desolation.

CHAPTER X.

THE HURDLE.

It was noon.

Jerome Cavalier and his wife, who were still kept prisoners in the "Room of God", at the door of which a dragoon stood sentinel, had passed a great portion of their wretched night in praying for their two children.

The anxiety of Madame Cavalier was inconceivable; was her mother dead! Did she yet live!"

Poor woman! if she had known that her mother, exhausted by the agony and dreadful struggle which she had so nobly sustained to maintain her faith, that her mother had died while she yet called for her daughter, died with the dreadful curses of the Arch-Priest and the monk, forced to be merciless to such an impenitence, ringing in her ears, died thus, that good and venerable grandmother who hoped to have ended her life in the light of a day of

sunshine in the midst of her assembled family whom she had piously blessed.

Jerome Cavalier had often vainly enquired concerning her condition from the sentinel at the door.

The window had remained open, the spreading top of the walnut-tree permitted only a portion of the road, which skirted the farm, to be visible.

Some dragoons passed along it to lead their horses to water, the Protestant and his wife interrogated them; their questions were answered by coarse ribaldry.

These excruciating sufferings lasted till one o'clock; then the hautboys and the kettle-drums of the dragoons resounded; a great movement reigned in the house. The shrill and barbarous sound of the horn of the Miquelets was heard in the distance, whilst in the interior of the farm were heard the voices of the subalterns who collected their troopers and read over the muster-roll.

For a moment, the Farmer and his wife thought that the dragoons were about to quit Saint Andéol.

In suspense and anxiety, they stood before the window, the sound of the horn of the

Miquelets came nearer and nearer: the dull tread of a troop of infantry announced that the irregulars were entering the farm-yard by the great gate, which could not be seen by Jerome Cavalier or his wife.

To the noise and tumult which had reigned in the house for the last hour succeeded the most profound silence.

This silence appeared frightful to Jerome Cavalier and his wife; they felt their hearts contracted with the pressure of a fearful anguish.

All at once a low, impassioned, trembling voice which seemed to proceed from a window beneath that occupied by this unfortunate pair, said these words:

"Monsieur, madame, are you there?"

"It is the voice of Martha!" said Madame Cavalier; "Praised be God! we shall hear about my mother."

She then cried—

"How is my mother?—is she better?"

Both, leaning eagerly out of the window, awaited the reply of Martha, with profound anxiety.

After a moment's silence, the maid answered with a voice broken with sobbing—

"In the name of heaven, do not remain at that window!"

"But my mother—how is my mother?" repeated Madam Cavalier.

"*Monsieur*!—for the love of God, do not let my mistress stay there. My God! my God! do not remain at the window," repeated Martha in a tone of the greatest horror.

"And why not?" asked Jerome Cavalier, while his wife, who began to suspect something frightful, looked at him with an air of terror.

"Ah! the window! shut the window! they are just going," cried the servant.

And they heard the shutters of the window, at which the maid was, shut in haste.

At the same instant, before the farmer and his wife could stir a step for astonishment, the big gate of the farm-yard creaked upon its hinges, the ringing of a mules' bells was heard, and the two Protestants saw, passing rapidly before the window, like a frightful apparition, a long wicker hurdle, with a harness of cords, dragged at full gallop by a mule ridden by a Miquelet of the most repulsive appearance.

Upon the hurdle they recognised the body of their mother, her grey hairs, already

soiled with blood, were dragged in the dirt.

"My mother!" cried Madame Cavalier setting up a dreadful cry and throwing herself with open arms towards the dead body.

Through accident or despair the unfortunate woman, carried away by this movement of anguish, fell through the window and killed herself at the foot of the stone bench, where, the very evening before, she was seated so peacefully surrounded by her children.

At this moment the dragoons and Miquelets who had protected the execution of the sentence, passed slowly in battle-order.

In the middle of them was seen the Arch-Priest.

He rode his palfry, dressed in a frock of black stuff and a cloak—also black—which nearly covered his horse. His pale countenance, rendered livid by the profound emotions which agitated him, bore an expression of intrepidity and menace. A cold sweat stood upon his bald brow; sometimes he cast an eaglelook on the inhabitants of Saint Andéol, who in mute consternation had assembled round the farm; sometimes he appeared to cast

down his eyes involuntarily, as if he had been troubled with a secret remorse.

The Abbé du Chayla had not ordered this barbarous act, fully conformable as it was to the edict and ordinances of the king, without long and painful hesitation. He thought it necessary to strike the country with terror, by this dreadful example; he had encountered, in the grandmother of this heretical family, a *fanaticism* so unconquerable, an aversion so decided, to the Church of Rome, a resolution so impious to brave eternal punishment, that every sentiment of pity was extinguished within him.

But when he saw Madame Cavalier, precipitate herself through the window, he thought it was an act of suicide.

This new crime exasperated him; in his religious indignation, he gave orders, also in conformity with the Edicts, that the body of the daughter, should, as well as that of the mother, be dragged upon the hurdle.

This new sentence was executed.

The Protestants of St. Andèol were assembled at the gate of the farm; all, men, women, and children, young and old, knelt down bareheaded, before the farm, in a sad and gloomy

silence; when the fatal hurdle left the yard, they sang a funereal psalm in a loud voice.

It is impossible to describe the majestic and intensely mournful effect of this hymn; from the union of all these voices, from the deepest and youngest, to the most infirm and trembling, there rose a grand, calm, and threatening harmony. It was the first cry of sorrow and suppressed indignation raised by an oppressed people.

In vain the Marquis of Florac commanded his subalterns, "to make those brawlers hold their tongues." Threats and blows with the flat of the sabre were useless, faithful to the courage of endurance and of invincible resignation, which they displayed in their religious meetings, the Protestants despite this violence, remained upon their knees, and continued their psalm.

The dragoons vainly charged at full trot, to disperse them. Trampled under the horses' hoofs, the Cevennese, beaten down and wounded, uttered no complaint, but remained in the spot where they knelt; those who were not wounded, continued the hymn with intrepid tranquillity.

When the psalm was ended, they dispersed.

* * * * * *

Let us return to Jerome Cavalier.

Still confined in spite of his entreaties, in spite of the horrible death of his wife; he looked forward with firmness and resignation to the future life of desolation which this death bequeathed to him; but he trusted with pious hope in the eternal happiness of the mother of his children, of the woman whom he had loved so much.

About three o'clock, the Capuchin came to look for Celeste, and Gabriel; the troops and the Arch-Priest were about to leave the village.

Not seeing the two little Cevennese, the first action of the monk was to run to the bed, he raised the curtains and found nothing.

"The children! where are your children? You will account for them," he said to Jerome Cavalier.

The old man did not appear to hear him.

"Your children, your children!" repeated the Capuchin.

Jerome Cavalier, without looking at the

monk, repeated these verses of the Bible which he pronounced in a hollow voice, while his cheeks were bathed with tears:

"'There is none to guide her among all the sons whom she hath brought forth; neither is there any that taketh her by the hand of all the sons that she hath brought up. These things have come unto thee, desolation and destruction, and the famine and the sword; by whom shall I comfort thee?'"

In despair of obtaining any information from the farmer, the Capuchin addressed himself to the dragoon:

"Then the children have escaped?" said he, "why did you let them pass, against your orders?"

"If they have escaped," answered the soldier insolently, "it must be by the window, because they did not go out by the door. If you didn't want to lose them, your Reverence ought to have put one of them in each of your sleeves, they are long enough."

"Wretch!" said the enraged monk, "you will account to me for the escape of these children."

"I will account for it? Then your Reverence will account to me for my charger's next

stumble. That will be just as fair," said the trooper shrugging his shoulders, and without doubt, reckless of the monk's threat, he turned his back to him rudely without another word, and began impudently to whistle the tune of *The Prince of Orange*, which he accompanied by beating time with his spurred heels.

The Capuchin addressed himself again to Jerome Cavalier, with every appearance of passion, "You will not tell where your children are; then you will go in the *ceps* to Montpellier, the tribunal will know how to make you speak."

Despite the most minute search, they found no traces of Gabriel or Celeste.

The unhappy father was then put in the *ceps* by the orders of the Arch-priest, and placed on one of the carts which transported the Religionist prisoners.

Some were to remain in the custody of the Arch-priest in the cloisters of Pont-Mont-Vert, the central seat of his mission in the Cevennes; the others were to be moved on to Montpellier there to receive sentence according to their crimes.

These prisoners were very numerous; they were composed of Protestant gentlemen, and shopkeepers, convicted of having endeavoured

to leave France contrary to the Edicts of the King which forbade this flight under pain of the galleys, and of death, in case of a second attempt. The women and girls, guilty of the same crime, were sent to Houses of Correction there to be indiscriminately confined with the vilest of their sex. They were there publicly whipped by the hands of the hangman. A young Cevennese, by name Catherine Doux, accused of having preached was to be hanged, and did in fact suffer accordingly.

A minister, surprised in the act of preaching to a congregation in the mountains, was reserved for the stake. Many children of both sexes, torn from their families, were destined to receive a Roman Catholic education in monasteries.

The cars which carried these unfortunate victims were long and narrow; a beam, split lengthwise, received between its two divisions the feet of the prisoners, who thus being unable to stand, or lie, leant against the sides of the cart which some charitable hand had lined with straw.

Men, women, and children were thrown together in these carts drawn by oxen.

These unfortunate creatures consoled, ex-

horted, and encouraged one another to suffer persecution with patience. From time to time they sang a psalm to distract their sorrow or one of them read aloud a passage from the Bible or from Jurien's Pastoral Letters, which had been concealed from the vigilance of their jailers.

It was about four o'clock, when this long train of vehicles was collected on the place of Saint Andéol: on the first car was placed Jerome Cavalier.

In spite of his heroic resolution, the old man appeared overcome; tears bathed his cheeks while he cast around him a last look on this homestead once so calm, on this enchanting country which he left in desolation.

His wife had just died by a fearful death; he knew not the fate of his children; old, weak, and solitary he was dragged to the black and formidable prisons of Montpellier. He was crushed beneath the influence of these repeated shocks; yet he felt some consolation in the touching affection of one of his labouring men named Castanet, who, with his knapsack on his back, with his stick and wooden shoes in his hand, timidly approached the car and said to his master:

"When you want anything, sir, you have only to call for Castanet, if you please. I shall be there near the car."

"They will not let you stay there, my friend," said Jerome Cavalier. "Remain on the farm. By following me you will expose yourself to danger. Pray, remain on the farm."

"Oh, you see sir, I cannot remain when they are taking you to prison, M. Cavalier," said Castanet with respectful firmness.

Then, without waiting his master's answer, he took his place near the cart, to be in readiness to obey his master's orders.

At five o'clock the hautboys of the dragoons sounded to saddle, and the column left the village.

The Brigadier Larose and four troopers formed the van-guard; altho' the country was still quiet, an insurrectionary movement was daily feared.

Then came the Arch-priest mounted on his palfrey. He answered with a gloomy and absent air to the questions of the brilliant Marquis of Florac who, still light and careless, made the Spanish jennet which he mounted for the journey caracole and prance, while his chargers were led in hand behind him by his grooms.

The company of the dragoons of Saint Sernin followed their young officer, and preceded the file of carts which contained the prisoners; the Capuchin, Captain Paul, and his sergeant, all on horseback, at the head of the Miquelets, brought up the rear of this column. Sad and slow as a funeral procession, it commenced its march in the midst of the tears and consternation of the inhabitants of Saint Andéol who saw the man whom they had always so profoundly venerated, depart from them in the chains of a criminal.

During nearly two hours, the troops crossed the fertile fields of Little Canaan. To this fertile and cultivated scenery soon succeeded the arid and shattered steeps of the volcanic mountains of Lozere, which shut in this enchanting valley on the North as Mount Aygoal shuts it in upon the West.

The sun began to cast his rays more obliquely; the column entered a hollow way bordered on each side by perpendicular rocks. On their summit grew tufts of stunted and prickly furze.

The shades of night began to thicken around this deep gorge; the column was forcing itself deeper and deeper into the wilderness of rock.

All of a sudden a voice resounded in the air; this sonorous and powerful voice uttered only these words, in the midst of the silence of the night.

"My father! the blood of my mother shall be avenged; it is I who say it to you, Marquis of Florac, in a short time you will see me, it is I who say it to you, I John Cavalier, the baker of Anduze, the betrothed of Isabelle!"

Then everything fell again into ominous silence, and the column pursued its march.

CHAPTER XI.

THE MYSTERIES OF THE CHATEAU OF MAS-ARRIBAS.

We will leave the Arch-priest, his escort, and the prisoners proceeding slowly westward towards the old Abbey of Pont-de-Mont-Vert, and we will return to the Chateau of Mas-Arribas, whither Celeste and Gabriel were so suddenly conducted by their brother, John Cavalier.

Celeste and Gabriel, startled out of their sleep by the dragoons, conducted at midnight to Ephraim, who had always inspired them with great fear, and at length left alone in the gloomy castle of the glass-maker, believed themselves, poor children! under the influence of a bad dream.

The apartment in which they were placed

was soon to become for them a fresh object of terror.

It was a vast and long room, lit at one of its ends by a single, narrow, oriel window, raised very high above the ground.

The stained glass of this window represented, with even an exaggeration of its terrors, the Beast of the Apocalypse, thus described in the dark vision of St. John.

"And I stood upon the sand of the sea, and saw a beast rise out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns. . . And the beast which I saw was like unto a leopard, and his feet were as the feet of a bear, and his mouth as the mouth of a lion."

Aided by the powerful assistance of transparent colours, the painter had employed all the resources of his art to represent the horrible aspect of this monster. The body, of a reddish fallow spotted with black, supported itself on huge brown paws, hairy, and armed with formidable claws; its huge heads opened threatening mouths, red with blood; finally, from the midst of the thick mane which fell over the distorted faces of the Beast, shone forth eyes, round, grey, and glaring with a frightful lustre.

This terrific figure stood forth upon a dead

black ground; at the bottom of the window were read these words of the Revelation of St. John written in blood red characters.

"She shall eat the flesh of Kings, and the flesh of captains, and the flesh of mighty men, and the flesh of horses and of them that sit on them, and the flesh of all men both free and bond, both small and great."

The deep colours of this window suffered only a pale and doubtful light to enter the apartment. The walls were panelled with oak; the only beds were two biers placed on the ground and strewn with heath, with a table and a bench by their side.

Seated on this bench Celeste and Gabriel clung closely to one another, as they had clung the evening before on the bank of the fresh brook of the Hort Diou, under their little green bower of ivy and of flowering hawthorn.

That morning, as soon as their brother had departed, and without saying a single word to them, Du Serre had led the two children to this sinister-looking room.

Since that time no one had come to see them. Against their will, they cast a fixed, almost a fascinated glance upon the frightful

creature with its glaring eyes and its seven yawning mouths.

An effect of light, the cause of which they did not detect, added still more to the fear of the two little Cevennese. The sky was cloudy, as the sun appeared or disappeared the transparence of the colours became more or less strong, and the eyes of the monster therefore seemed at times to kindle and to dart forth lightnings, and at times to grow dim and to veil themselves in shade.

Not a sound was heard from without.

The terror of the children reached its climax; they hid their faces in each other's breasts crying aloud with heartrending accents,

"Mother, mother!"

Everything remained silent.

"Father! Brother!"

The same silence.

After some minutes of fresh anguish, Gabriel, tearing himself from his sister's arms, ran to the door to beat it and call for help. He made the circuit of the room in vain; there was no appearance of a door; the wood-work was close and united in every part.

Terrified at this discovery, he returned to his sister, embraced her in an agony of un-

utterable despair, and both believing themselves at their last moment, trembling and weeping, called once more the names of their mother, their father, and their brother in the midst of sobs.

Nothing answered them.

Then they threw themselves upon their knees, turned their eyes away from the monster which seemed to threaten them, and prayed fervently.

A little calmed by the holy influence of prayer, as well as diverted from their terror, the two children tried to console themselves by a vain hope.

"Don't let us be afraid, sister," said Gabriel, drying his eyes still wet with tears; "do you see, we must not look at the window, where the monster is which frightens us. Let us look at one another. Look at me; that gives me courage; and besides, why should we be afraid; we have never done any one harm; it was our brother who brought us here; our father has given us his blessing. Don't let us be afraid."

"But, my brother, we are in the Castle of the Glass—" And the poor little thing, not

daring to pronounce the terrible word, hid her face between her hands.

"But why should you think that the Glass-maker would do us any harm, sister? And besides, God will not abandon us; He is always with us; he will help us. When Azarias and his companions were thrown into the furnace, did not the angel of the Lord beat the flames down with a moist wind-like dew, so that the fire could not harm them, whilst they gave thanks to God?"

"That is true, brother," said Celeste, trying to overcome her terror—"Azarias was saved the flames."

"And Daniel!—Do you recollect how he was put into the den, with seven great lions? Because the Lord was with him, the lions did not dare to touch him; for you see, sister, God is always with good and pious children. Come, don't be afraid; I am not; I dare look at it—see there."

And the child pointed to the window, with a resolute air.

"I will try not to be afraid," said Celeste. "You are right, brother, no one can wish to hurt us."

Then, with a slight shudder, and crossing her arms over her breast, she said—

"I am cold."

"And you are perhaps sleepy also, sister, for you have had no rest all night."

"Yes," said the child, "my head is very heavy."

"Lie down there in that chest. I will put heather over you," said Gabriel.

"If I sleep, you will be alone, and you will perhaps be afraid—I will not sleep," said Celeste, with a charming resolution.

"No, no—I assure you—so long as I am near you, and have one of your hands in mine I shall not be afraid; sleep, dear sister," and he began to make up the bed of heather, as well as he could.

Celeste laid herself down upon it. Gabriel approached the side of the bier, took his sister's hand in his own, and tenderly leaning over her, asked her—

"How do you feel?"

"I am warmer—I feel better, brother." Then she added, with a sigh—"Now, when shall we see our mother again?"

Their mother! Unhappy children!

"Perhaps to-morrow, sister, when the soldiers and the priests shall have left the farm, without doubt my brother will retnrn to seek us. But try to sleep, and to be warm, and above all, keep up your courage."

And Gabriel, to give his sister pleasant dreams, and drive away the painful images which oppressed her, sought in his memory for some cheerful passage in the Bible, and repeated with his childish voice that beautiful passage of a prophecy of Isaiah, which begins thus—

"The wolf also shall lie down with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid, and the calf, and the young lion, and the fatling together, and a little child shall lead them."

Worn out with fatigue, and the cruel emotions of the last night and day, Celeste, gently lulled to sleep by her brother's voice, which recalled to her thoughts images full of calm and sweetness, shut, by degrees, her large blue eyes and went to sleep.

The day declined, the shade of evening began to steal upon this vast, deserted room; Gabriel was afraid; he pressed in his hand that

which his sister had left in his when she fell asleep.

It cost him an heroic effort of determination not to wake Celeste.

Some moments afterwards, a terrible idea alarmed him.

The most profound silence reigned in the Castle; they had seen no one since the morning; no food had been brought to the children —Gabriel feared that they had been forgotten.

The night—for it was now fully night—fell dark; the colours of the painted window which had become less and less distinct, began now to disappear altogether. One would have said that the frightful monster vanished in the darkness, which soon became intense.

Delivered from this fearful vision, but terrified at being left alone in the dark, Gabriel could not overcome his fear; he crept up to his sister, and said in a low voice—

Sister, sister, are you asleep?"

Celeste answered not; her brother heard nothing but her soft and regular breathing.

By a sublime effort, the boy did not speak to her again; he hid his face in his hands, and in a paroxysm of terror, shut his eyes not to see the darkness.

At the end of half an hour he heard a confused, strange, and hollow sound.

Sometimes it seemed the distant muttering of thunder, sometimes the clank of chains, sometimes doleful psalms sung in the distance by the voices of children, which had nothing human in their sound.

These voices resembled a great cry of anguish rather than a religious prayer.

From time to time all was silent. In the midst of the profound silence which succeeded this noise, another voice, one loud, awful, and tremendous as the thunder's, pronounced this strange word: VAIEDABBER.*

After a fresh pause, this word was repeated in concert by the children's voices.

But as they pronounced this singular word, they took such a tone of pain that one would have thought that this word burnt the lips that pronounced it.

The forehead of Gabriel became moistened with a cold sweat, he said a second time with a trembling voice:

"Sister, are you asleep?" She was still

+ Vaiedabber (the first word of the Book of Numbers) signifies in Hebrew And he hath spoken.

asleep; not being able to overcome his fear, Gabriel threw himself into her arms, crying out: "Do you hear, sister, do you hear?"

Celeste awoke with a start.

New objects of terror united to deprive these unhappy children of their faculties. The privation of sleep, their long fast, the events which had succeeded one another since the morning, began to re-act upon their excited brain.

Almost in a state of dream, a mysterious power forced them to look fixedly at objects which in their fear they wished to fly from.

The noise of the children's voices had drawn nearer and nearer.

A light at first imperceptible and of a bluish hue began to glimmer in the midst of one of the panels of the wall.

Little by little this pale light extended and became circular, growing more and more luminous.

When it had reached a circumference of two or three feet, it increased no more.

Through this opening, till now hidden by a sliding panel, and closed by a small glass window, slightly coloured with blue, which lit

up by degrees, Celeste and Gabriel beheld an extraordinary scene.

Seen through this glass of a dull and clouded transparency, this scene appeared to take place by moonlight; the sounds, weakened by the obstacle of the glass, reached the ears of the children, as much artificially subdued as the colours did their eyes.

They saw a large, circular hall, to which light, doubtless, was conveyed through a skylight, for they did not perceive any appearance of a window.

A human skeleton appeared in the middle of this apartment. He held a bright scythe in his fleshless hands, a black helmet covered his skull, from the depth of his hollow orbits gleamed forth a phosphoric light; he was mounted upon the image of a horse whose head was hidden by a black plume, and whose body was covered by a long black horse-cloth.

"My brother, my brother," said Celeste in a faint voice, pressing against Gabriel, "it is Death."

"My God, my God! do not desert us," said the boy putting his arms round his sister, but

fixing still a glance of eager terror upon this frightful scene.

The walls of the mysterious hall, in which the skeleton stood, represented dismal subjects taken from Scripture History; they were painted like frescoes, in a coarse but large style; there was seen the sacrifice of Abraham, the death of Sisera, the destruction of Pharoah's army, the martyrdom of Stephen, &c.

All at once the distant choir, which Gabriel and Celeste had already heard, sang anew this psalm of Theodore Beza to a mournful measure:

Why dost thou, Lord, abhor my soul
  In grief that seeketh thee?
And now, O Lord! why dost thou hide
  Thy face away from me?

I am afflict as dying still
  From youth this many a year;
Thy terrors, which do vex me ill,
  With troubled mind I bear.

At each verse the voices came nearer and nearer.

A panel of the Hall of the Skeleton opened silently, two files of children advanced slowly, their heads bowed, and their arms crossed upon their breasts. All of them, boys as well as girls, wore long white robes with a train, their long hair fell upon their shoulders, their faces were of a fearful thinness; their cheeks were livid, their eyes hollow, their look dull and fixed; their every feature bore in fine an expression of habitual suffering.

Instead of being clear and silvery, their voices were grating and convulsive.

One might have thought it a procession of phantoms if they had not began again to sing, in chorus, this last verse with an accent of the profoundest desolation:

I am esteemed as one of them
  That in the pit do fall:
And made as one among the men
  That have no strength at all,
As one among the dead and free
  From things that here remain;
It were more ease for me to be
  With them the which are slain.*

* I have given a portion of the old version of the Psalms in order to convey to the render the ruggedness of the original. —Translator.

After this verse the children were again silent.

While they listened to the mournful and muffled sound of these funereal hymns, while they looked upon these faces so pale, and these eyes so dimmed, Celeste and Gabriel thought that they beheld spectres. The similarity of their age to that of these unhappy creatures rendered this spectacle still more hideously interesting to them.

The children ranged themselves in a circle round the hall, casting around them gloomy and bewildered looks.

Two new characters appeared.

A tall man, dressed in an ample red robe, with very long sleeves; this was Du Serre. A woman also tall, dressed in red, and of a severe countenance; this was his wife.

Upon their appearance all the children manifested a great fear, their knees trembled, they pressed in fear one against another.

Du Serre approached the row of little boys; his wife that of the little girls. They took each child by the hand, and looked at them long, very long in silence.

Under the fixed and penetrating eye of the glass-maker and his wife, the victim appeared

influenced by a painful oppression, gave every sign of a violent agitation, and trembled convulsively.

After some minutes' examination Du Serre and his wife said to each child:

"The Spirit will not visit you to-day."

Then they went to another.

When Du Serre had reached the victim who stood last but one in the row of boys, Du Serre said to him:

"The Spirit will visit you," and then he breathed upon his forehead.

His wife said the same words to the last girl but one; she also breathed upon her forehead.

Then all the children, excepting the boy and girl whom Du Serre and his wife held by the hands, fell upon their knees, crying out:

"*Vaiedabber, vaiedabber.*"

The elect, whom Du Serre and his wife had singled out for the visitation of the Spirit, began to show the symptoms of a violent attack of epilepsy; their eyes became magnified to a frightful degree, their pupils dilated, their lips quivered and became dry."

"The Spirit cometh! the Spirit cometh!" cried Du Serre in a voice of thunder, address-

ing the young victim whom he held by the hands.

"The Spirit—cometh—" repeated the child in a weak and hollow voice, feeling itself already trembling with a slight nervous agitation.

"What feelest thou?—what feelest thou?" said Du Serre approaching him.

"Oh! I feel the Spirit working within me; it burns me here, here!"

And the child, with haggard eyes, pressed violently both his hands against his panting breast; his head was thrown back, his cheeks became flushed.

The girl gradually showed the same symptoms, and the wife of Du Serre, said:

"The Spirit cometh!"

The rest of the children, on their knees, with their eyes fixed with ardour upon their companions, appeared about to show the same symptoms; some trembled, others burst into sobs; these became stiff in every limb; and these wrung their hands; all repeated in a low voice:

"The Spirit cometh."

Du Serre, who followed with an attentive eye the progress of the crisis in the victim whom he held by the hand, approached the

child again, and once more breathed upon his forehead, saying:

"The Spirit is about to speak."

"The Spirit is about to speak!" repeated the child in a stifled voice.

He shut his eyes, a light foam discolored his livid lips, his breathing became difficult, his larynx, swelling up, rendered his voice at once shrill and hissing.

The victim was standing, and had his two hands placed in the two hands of Du Serre.

The crisis appeared to reach its paroxysm. After a long silence, the child cried out in a broken voice, and keeping his eyes shut. "The Spirit is come!—it is there—it takes me up—it opens before me the gate of visions!"

"What seest thou? what seest thou?" asked Du Serre.

"I see seven golden candlesticks, and in the midst of them one like unto the Son of Man, he is clothed with a garment down to the foot, and girt with a golden girdle."

"What else seest thou?" said Du Serre.

"His head and his hairs are white as snow, and his eyes are as a flame of fire."

"What else seest thou?"

"His feet are like unto fine brass, as if they

burned in a furnace, his voice is as the sound of many waters."

"What else seest thou?"

"He has in his right hand seven stars; out of his mouth goes a sharp two edged sword; his countenance shineth like the sun in his strength—he speaks! he speaks!"

At this moment, the child suffered some internal convulsion so painful that, throwing himself violently back, and stiffening in an epileptic movement, he struggled to escape from the hands of Du Serre who held him by force, crying out, "And what saith the Spirit?'

"I cannot hear it as yet," said the child, and he appeared to listen, then he made a bound, and cried as if he suffered the greatest agony, "He speaketh! he speaketh! His words are fire, they burn me here, always here —in the heart!"

"What saith the Spirit, what saith the Spirit," repeated Du Serre.

"He saith: 'I am he that liveth and was dead: I am the beginning and the end, the first and the last and behold I am alive for evermore, and have the keys of hell and of death.'

"What else saith he?"

"He saith unto me: 'My child, write the

things which thou hast seen, and the things which are, and the things which shall be hereafter.' "

"What else saith the Spirit?"

"He saith unto me: 'My child, fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer; behold the devil shall cast some of you into prison that ye may be tried, and ye shall have tribulation ten days. Be ye faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.' "

Then, as if exhausted by this internal vision, and the phantoms of his own distracted brain, the unhappy child staggered. Du Serre made him sit at the foot of the Skeleton, and left him to the care of his wife while he put questions to the girl who had presented the same symptoms of somnambulism.

"What seest thou, what seest thou?" he said to her,

"I see the sun become black as sackcloth, and the moon as blood, and the stars of heaven fall into the earth, even as a fig-tree casteth her green figs when she is shaken of a mighty wind; I hear the voice which saith that the great day of the wrath of the Lord is come."

"What else seest thou?"

"I see clouds of locusts whose shapes are

like unto horses prepared unto battle,—and on their heads as it were crowns like gold—their faces are as the faces of men—their teeth as the teeth of lions—they have breastplates as it were breastplates of iron—the sound of their wings is as the sound of chariots, of many horses running to battle—I see horses, and them that sit on them, having breastplates of fire, and of jacinth, and of brimstone."

"And what else seest thou?"

"I see an Angel; and a rainbow is upon his head, and his feet as pillars of fire."

And the girl trembled, her shut eyes opened twice; her hands, held by Du Serre, contracted violently, her voice seemed more stifled.

"What seest thou yet?" said Du Serre.

The child shut her eyes and said,

"The angel crieth out unto me with a loud voice, as when a lion roareth—"

"What saith he?"

"He saith unto me: 'My child, thou must prophesy again before many peoples and nations and tongues, and kings.'"

"What else saith he?"

"He saith unto me: 'My child the day of the wrath of the Lord is come, and the time of the dead that they should be judged, and

that the Lord should give reward to his servants the prophets and them that fear his name, small and great, and should destroy them, which destroy the earth.' "

"Who are they whom God appoints to be destroyed?"

"The Papists, the worshippers of Baal,—they who persecute our brethren."

Du Serre allowed the child, who now appeared overcome, to recover herself; a cold sweat deluged her forehead, her lips foamed, her breast heaved and fell violently. All at once she uttered a loud cry, fell, became stiff, and remained on her knees stretching out both arms to Du Serre in a state of complete immoveability.

The Spirit is gone out from her," he said; then he began to interrogate once more the boy who appeared more and more convulsed.

"What seest thou?" said he.

"I see an angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting Gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth and to every nation and kindred, and tongue and people. He is about to speak, he speaketh."

"What saith he?"

"He saith: 'my child, fear God, and give glory to him, for the hour of his judgment is

come.' I see another angel, and in his hand a sword, he is about to speak, he speaketh."

"What saith he?"

"He saith: 'Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen because all nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication,' "I see her—I see her!"

"What is this Babylon like unto?"

"She is seated upon a scarlet coloured beast, arrayed in purple and scarlet color, and decked with precious stones and pearls. Upon her forehead is written 'Babylon the Great, the mother of Harlots and Abominations of the Earth.' She holds in her hand a cup of gold full of the blood of the martyrs of Jesus, I see her drink thereof, she is drunken with that blood—I see her stagger, I see her fall—Babylon the Great is fallen, drunken with blood."

"What is Babylon?"

"She is the Romish Church and her priests drunk with the blood of our brethren. They shall fall like Babylon the Great; I see them fall."

"What else seest thou?"

"I see a white cloud, and upon the cloud an angel sits—he is like unto the Son of Man; he

has on his head a golden crown, he wears a golden girdle—he holds in his hand a sharp sickle—Another angel is about to speak, now he speaks—"

"What saith he?"

"He saith to the angel who sitteth upon the cloud: 'Thrust in thy sickle and reap; for the time is come for thee to reap, for the harvest of the earth is fully ripe.'"

"What is the harvest which is to be reaped?" said Du Serre.

"The harvest of the worshippers of Baal—the Papists who adore Anti-christ."

"What else seest thou?"

"I see the angel who sat on the cloud thrust in his sickle on the earth; and the earth is reaped. But the angel is about to speak. He speaketh."

"What saith he?"

"He crieth to him who hath the sickle: 'Thrust in once more thy sharp sickle, and gather the clusters of the vine of the earth, for her grapes are fully ripe.'"

"What else seest thou?"

"I see the angel thrust his great sickle into the earth—now he has gathered the vine of the earth—and now he throws the grapes into the

great wine-press of the wrath of God—And now the Lord treads it, but the wine is changed to blood—it comes up to the horses'-bridles."

"What is the sickle? what is the harvest? what is the vine? what is the wine?"

"The sickle is the wrath and the arm of the chosen people of God, the vine, is the idolatry of Babylon, the grapes are the worshippers of the Pope, the wine is the blood that will be shed."

"What saith the voice?—what saith the voice?"

"It saith, 'Behold the will of the Lord of Hosts. Let your arms be girt with strength, ye who hearken now to my words by the mouth of my prophets, in these days wherein the true temple of the Lord shall be rebuilt. Hear ye them—hear ye them—'*For of your children have I raised up unto myself Prophets*'.* Fight ye then the Philistines, ye shall cast youselves upon the swords and ye shall not be wounded. To arms! O Israel, to your tents! O Israel!" cried the child with a loud voice; and he sprang to his feet, raised his hands above his head,

* From the Prophecy of Amos. c. 2. v. 11 (French version). It is unnecessary to say that all the answers of this terrible catechism are taken from the Apocalypse.

and opened his eyes, which appeared fixed and dull as those of a corpse, to an unnatural width.

Then he fell back completely rigid and insensible.

All the children then raised a cry as if it were of torture, repeating the words:

"*Vaiedabber, vaiedabber!*"

And all disappeared.

Gabriel and Celeste were left once more in total darkness.

The shock had been too great for their frail beings.

During the continuance of this horrible vision, their attention, violently excited, had given them a feverish and factitious strength which seemed almost supernatural.

But, when the vision was withdrawn, they fell annihilated by so many overwhelming emotions, and lost all consciousness.*

* It is not without much scruple that I have ventured to present the whole of this appalling chapter before the English reader in an unmutilated state. I have only been induced to do so by the great light which it throws upon those pretended supernatural visitations which have been too often, and in too many forms, the scandal of the Christian world. I wish also to refer to my note at the end of the next chapter.—Translator.

CHAPTER XII.

THE MYSTERIES REVEALED.

A few days after the scene which we have just described, Du Serre conversed quietly with a friend who had just arrived at the Chateau of Mas-Arribas, both were seated at a table supplied with much comfort and elegance.

Through the open casement, appeared in the distance, by the light of the rising moon, the shattered peaks of Mount Aygoal which arose out of an ocean of sombre verdure, silvered here and there by the soft reflexion of the star of night.

The projection of a wing of the chateau rendered visible the window of stained-glass which had caused such terror to Celeste and Gabriel, but it was now illuminated by a light from within.

Du Serre was comfortably wrapped in a long dressing-gown; his features, usually harsh and sarcastic, were now almost smiling.

His guest, a little well fed man, dressed in black, whose look was mild and simple, whose countenance was open and whose cheeks wore a high color, offered a perfect contrast to the glass-maker.

This man, one of the first physicians of Geneva, was called Dr. Claudius. He had taken off his perruque in order to be more at his ease.

The supper drew towards its close. It was while they sipped some glasses of old wine of Grenache of a ruby colour, or broke some fresh green almonds that these two persons had the following conversation in the absence of Madame Du Serre who had just left the table.

"To the success of my wager, my good Claudius!" said Du Serre touching the doctor's glass with his own.

"With all my heart Abraham, the more so that your wager is indisputably won."

"Hum! hum!" said Du Serre with an air both of doubt and sarcasm.

"How hum, hum!" exclaimed the Doctor. "There is no hum hum in the matter; I go

halves with you in the bet which I hope will prove to you that I think it a good one. Yes, certainly, I do sustain it and would sustain it before the whole Sorbonne. It would be possible as you bet with M. le Chevalier de Vertevil; it would be possible (God forbid that such an atrocity should happen, we are only speaking of a purely scientific hypothesis); I say a third time, it would be possible, by factitious means, to produce in children between the ages of twelve and fifteen all the phenomena of prophetical enthusiasm and ecstasy; it would even be very easy to make these unfortunate little creatures experience some of the symptoms of catalepsy or epilepsy. Who can doubt it? Have I not cited to you, in support of my opinion, the four ecstasies of Plato, the prophetic gifts of the Jews, the Bacchantes, the Mænads, the Sibyls, the Pythonesses of Antiquity? Alas it is but too true, man is armed with terrible and mysterious weapons against man . . But come, Abraham, let us talk of something else. It is quite enough to occupy oneself with the existing maladies of human nature, without thinking of what might unfortunately be occasioned to her by means

which are so frightful as to be almost demoniacal."

After a moment of silence, Du Serre said to Claudius.

"I do not wish to carry your mistake any farther, Claudius. I have won my bet. *I have proved that prophets can be made.*"

"I was sure of it," said Claudius with a certain air of pride. "I demonstrated the fact so clearly in the notes which I gave to you. But who decided in your favor against the Chevalier de Vertueil? the faculty of Medicine at Montpellier?"

"No, better than that, Claudius."

"The Faculty of Paris?"

"Better still."

"The faculty of Leyden then."

"Better still."

"The king's physician?"

"Oh, a thousand times better still than that, Claudius." The physician, in the height of astonishment looked at Du Serre without being able to understand him.

"But what is then the authority so irrefragable which has pronounced in your favour?"

"Experience, Claudius."

"Experience?—doubtless; those are facts

and proved experiments which I have cited to you in my notes, but—"

"Listen, Claudius," said Du Serre interrupting the doctor in his peculiarly harsh and sarcastic manner, "we have known each other since childhood, you are my friend. Circumstances are now serious, I ought to conceal nothing from you any longer, the grand moment is at hand."

"The grand moment is at hand? And what grand moment?" asked Claudius.

"The moment—" and after some hesitation Du Serre continued. "You shall know immediately, but we must take things up a little farther back. You have seen, since the revocation of the Edict of Nantes, and more particularly since the Peace of Ryswick, that the persecution of us Protestants becomes more severe than ever?"

"Alas, I know it Abraham, although my skill as a surgeon and my experience as a physician make me equally welcome to the catholics and to our brethren; for, in spite of the laws which forbid me to exercise my profession, the Papists know how to send for the *heretic* when anything is the matter with them. So that I have no personal cause of complaint;

the cause is simple enough, I am useful to both parties without distinction."

"And in that, Claudius, you are wrong," said Du Serre bitterly; "you ought to conform to the edicts like a loyal and faithful subject and when a catholic comes to you, answer him 'The King forbids me to relieve you.'"

"That is impossible Abraham, for I swear to you that it is impossible for me to tell at sight between a sick Catholic and a sick Protestant," said Claudius *naïvely*.

"Be easy, you will not henceforth be left the trouble of choosing between them," said Du Serre with a smile which astonished the physician. "But I continue, (said the glass-maker) the Persecution redoubles; our ministers, while they received martyrdom, have commanded our brethren to support all with resignation, and never to revolt, until the voice of God called them to arms by the mouth of his prophets."

"Poor Pastors! it is true, they wished to make the brethren hope that God would not abandon them. I saw David George at Nismes, at the moment that the flames stifled his voice he said, 'Resign yourselves to martyrdom my brethren, Christ delivered himself

without complaint to his executioners. When the Lord desires that his people shall resist their oppressors, he will know how to declare that the time is come and to call Israel to battle. Till then learn to suffer—'"

And the good Claudius wiped away a tear.

"But also, Claudius, what a bright day will that be when the voice of the Lord shall call his people to battle!"

"Alas! Abraham, the day of miracles is passed, thou knowest it well, the voice of God is silent."

"Not so, since thou hast made it speak; thou, my good Claudius! thou, my great magician; thou my Providence in a *blonde perruque;* thou, my Divinity in a short cloak!" cried Du Serre with a diabolic joy.

The doctor shook his head as if displeased, and said gravely to his friend:

"We have never been of the same way of thinking, Abraham; I am not perhaps the strictest of believers, but I never make a mockery of sacred things."

"Now I am speaking very seriously to you, my worthy Doctor Claudius; if I call you Providence, it is because, without knowing it, you have acted the part of Providence; if I call

you a Divinity, it is because you have caused the voice of God to speak."

"Upon my honour, Abraham, I do not understand one word of all this."

"I am about to be explicit. Being resolved to suffer persecution no longer, and certain that our people will not rise till they have heard the voice of God, knowing also that, as you say, the day of miracles is past, but wishing also that the voice of the Lord would call our people to arms since our resignation has not wearied the furies of Louis the XIV., it is three months since I imagined the plan which I am about to explain to you, and that plan I owe to you, since it occurred to me after one of our long conversations relative to cerebral affections."

"I remember those conversations very well," said Claudius, with an air of increasing astonishment, "they took place on the occasion of my last journey to Geneva, in reference to Pascal's letter about visionaries and enthusiasts."

"Exactly; the next day after that conversation I went to Mende; on my return, I told you a falsehood. I said that, under the impression of what was said at our last interview, I had made a bet with the Chevalier de Verteuil

ful an experiment upon God's creatures; you have not—"

"Silence!" said Du Serre, interrupting the physician. "They are singing their evening hymn. Listen to them."

In effect, the same chorus of children's voices and the same lugubrious, and, as it were, subterranean chaunt was heard which had caused so much fear to Celeste and Gabriel.

"If your ear was as long accustomed as my own to their accents," continued Du Serre, "you would distinguish the voices, still fresh and silvery, of the son and daughter of old Jerome Cavalier, whose wife and mother-in-law were dragged on the hurdle; he himself is at this moment a prisoner at Pont de Mont-Vert; these children are my two last pupils."

"Thy two last victims! Abraham."

Du Serre continued without having appeared to hear the doctor.

"I never met organizations less rebellious to my instructions, I never met imaginations more visionary, more melancholy, more accessible to the influences of terror. But one singular circumstance occurred; in vain we taught them, like the other children, the most sanguinary passages in the Bible. In their cataleptic

ecstasy, for they have already arrived at ecstasies, they pronounce no other words than such as breathe pity and sweetness. Then they are as beautiful as two archangels."

The physician arose abruptly, and said in terror:

"My God, my God! am I awake or do I dream? am I not the sport of some infernal delusion?"

"You are awake, you are awake, Claudius, but sit down and redouble your attention."

The physician sat down almost mechanically and leant his head on his hands after having cast around him a look of anguish and despair.

"The rest is simple," said Du Serre. "I have subjected all these children to the regimen which you have so scrupulously detailed to me in your notes; long fasts, denial of sleep, a profound solitude disturbed only by invisible and affrighting sounds, laid the work of disordering these childish imaginations. Some doses of henbane and opium prepared them for ecstasies. Then one evening in the amidst of a fiery cloud and bursts of thunder, I appeared before them like another Moses, I cited to them the prophecy of Amos: '*Of you children have I raised unto myself Prophets.*' I told them

that God had gifted me with his holy Spirit, that I had the power of communicating it to all. I told them that the Lord had chosen them to receive of me so great a gift, and to spread it over his people. Then the terror and supernatural appearances which surrounded me, the pride of being called to such holy destinies, had shaken their reason. I became to them more than a man, a formidable being placed between the Lord and his creature. After some time, their brain became delirious at the sight of me; they fell into raptures and terrors innumerable. In their calmer moments, as they did not know how to read, my wife made them learn by heart some passages of the prophecies, especially of the Apocalypse whose dreadful visions soon became realities to their darkened understanding."

"But do you know that this is more horrible than a murder?" cried Claudius raising his hands to heaven in indignation. "It is a violation of the most ethereal portion of our nature! It is a cruel and unnatural abuse of one of the most precious gifts of the Divinity! It is a sacrilege."

"You are a great child," answered Du Serre utterly unmoved, "I also made my pupils learn

by heart all the passages of Scripture which speak of Antichrist, of the empire and fall of Babylon, explaining to them how Babylon was the Romish Church, how the Pope was Antichrist, and how the day of Judgment was close at hand. Finally all the passages of Scripture which speak of calling to arms the Lord's people, were engraved in ineffaceable characters on the memory of these young enthusiasts. At this moment they believe themselves chosen by God to say to his people, 'To your tents O Israel!"

"Ah, I understand, I understand all now," said Claudius. And he hid his head in fear between his trembling hands.

"This was not enough," continued Du Serre "it was necessary that their eyes should be struck as well as their minds by these terrible visions. So I caused some of the most appalling visions of St. John to be painted on glass. What would have been an amusement for other children," said Du Serre with a diabolical smile, "in a word this magic lantern was for these, half-wild and almost insane as they were, one of the most dreadful trials which they had to undergo. At night, in the midst of their feverish vigils, they beheld suddenly arising out

of the darkness vague, undefinable, transparent images which recalled to their eyes all the monstrous phantoms which had appalled them."

"Oh my God, my God, why didst thou give science to man. Ah! the tree of knowledge is indeed a tree of death and perdition!"

"You are weak and timid, Claudius; like Prometheus, you recoil in horror at the sight of your own work."

"No, no, never did a more horrible, a more infernal design enter into the brain of man," cried the physician.

"It is horrible, it is infernal as the persecution which made it necessary," said Du Serre. "Read the Edicts against us Protestants and compare the two. But if the poison serves as an antidote, if the fire contends with fires, if the red hot iron arrests the flow of blood, what does that matter? Shall we shrink from this means? But your horror has not as yet attained its height. To finish my work I bethought myself of what you have taught me upon the subject of catalepsy, a terrible malady which is contagious at sight as you wrote to me, my worthy man of science."

Claudius raised his eyes to heaven in despair.

"The convulsive motions, the nervous symp-

toms of this disease would produce a lively impression on the vulgar. I wished to give this new excitement to my prophets. The son of Samuel the woodcutter was afflicted with catalepsy, my wife proposed to Samuel to undertake his cure. As soon as we got this child, we brought our enthusiasts to see his first attack, after having deprived them of food and sleep for several days; you will hardly believe it, Claudius, three children fell almost instantaneously into a paroxysm like that of Samuel's son. By degrees all became subject more or less to the like attacks, and by a phenomenon which you yourself brought to my knowledge, when those newly possessed were under the influence of these attacks, by a species of internal hallucination, all the visions of Scripture appeared to reproduce themselves in their brain, for they described them with an astonishing and terrible fidelity."

"And it is I, I who for a frivolous motive have become an accomplice of this tissue of horrors!" said the physician in despair.

"Now you understand my plan," said Du Serre with exultation without answering the physician. "On the first stormy night I shall let loose my prophets; they will go down from

the mountain and spread themselves over the plain crying out 'To arms, Israel!' To our Cevennese, will not this cry appear that voice of God which they have so long waited for? What other power than that of God could have inspired these children? And these strange, frightful visions which they will relate, will this primitive people attribute them to human means? No, no, the most incredulous will be unable to penetrate the mystery and the inspiration of these prophecies. The common people will see in them the breath of God. Soon our people who wait only for the voice of God to rebel will take up arms; Languedoc will arise from Gevaudan to Lozere; and we shall draw the sword from its sheath, not to be returned for many a year!"

"And then comes civil war with all its horrors," exclaimed Claudius. "But you will be crushed; but a partial movement will find no support; for the royal troops are numerous."

"All the Cevennes will rise at once," answered Du Serre, "my precautions are taken. The men of the plain will have John Cavalier for their chief, a young, resolute, intrepid partizan, beloved by all our youth. The mountaineers will have for their chief Ephraim,

the Forest-keeper of Aygoal, a merciless fanatic."

"But what can you hope? What are your objects?"

"We wish to reconquer our rights; we wish to obtain with arms in our hands even as our forefathers obtained it, the re-establishment of the Edict of Nantes; we wish to possess, like all the rest of our countrymen, our share of the sun of France, our own legitimate portion of her common freedom; nothing more and nothing less. The means which I would use are, you say, infernal. What matters it if they suit the intelligence of our population? After all it is the words, the prophecies of God which my prophets will disseminate. Once more, what matters the breath which bids the clarion ring if the signal for war resounds afar?" cried Du Serre with enthusiasm.

"What do I hear?" exclaimed Claudius interrupting him, "what cries are those?"

"Some child in its paroxysm—"

"Oh this house seems to me accursed!" cried Claudius with an air of bewilderment. "Abraham though the night is black tell them to saddle my mule and my servant's; I cannot

stay here a minute longer; I cannot—I am afraid to do so."

"But wait till to-morrow for daylight."

"No."

"Till to-morrow; only till to-morrow."

"No no, I tell you."

"You are mad, Claudius, remain—you must do so."

"I will set out instantly."

"It is impossible."

"I will go myself to give the orders for my departure," said Claudius rising.

"It is impossible," and Du Serre seized him by the arm.

"Abraham! what does this mean?" said Claudius, turning pale.

"You will not leave this house, you cannot do so."

"Force!"

"Have you not got possession of my secret?"

"Your secret, Abraham! But you ought not to have told it to me; and, besides, you know well that, horrible as it is, I will not betray it."

"It is impossible I tell you. Do you sup-

pose that I would have told you so much, if we were to have parted so soon?"

"What do you mean, Abraham?" cried Claudius.

"I mean that in a few days we shall be in arms; the swords and balls of the royalists will not spare us, and we have no physician to take care of our brethren. You must therefore make up your mind not to leave us before the end of the insurrection."

"Do you dare to detain me against my will?"

"It is necessary I tell you. To-morrow we will go out together to make a survey of the Cevennes, in order to mark out in what inaccessible points we may establish places of refuge for our wounded, as was done during the war of the great Duke of Rohan."

"Abraham, in the name of our friendship, I command you to leave me at liberty."

"Your services are too precious to our cause; you must not think of it," said Du Serre, with an air of determination.*

* Note by the Translator. Brueys (the author of "An Answer to the Complaints of the Protestants of France against the means employed to reconcile them with the Church." Paris, 1686.) and other Roman Catholic authors of the same class, unite

in affixing upon the memory of Du Serre the horrible charge adopted by M. Eugene Sue. The first-named author in his "History of Fanaticism in our own times," goes so far as to charge the Academy of Geneva with the origination of the infernal scheme which he says was entrusted by them to the execution of Du Serre. But, in this instance, fortunately for the honour of human nature, the accounts of these authors, who wrote under the censorship of a despotic government and the shadow of the Bastille, not to mention the manifest influence of the strongest religious and political feeling, are frequently unfaithful, and rarely to be received without much caution. Upon the other hand, Beman in his "History of the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes" p. 1016, asserts that "the French government suborned some who were under their direction to counterfeit the inspired." The true solution of those strange excesses of religious enthusiasm, which in the words of a contemporary author, "spread over the Cevennes like a flood with such a torrent, that a conflagration blown with the wind does not fly faster from house to house than this fury flew from parish to parish," will probably be found in the following considerations.

The benefits of a regular ministry of souls were entirely taken away from the Protestants of France by the edicts of Louis XIV., which have been cited in the text. One natural consequence of this tyranny was the introduction of private and indiscriminate preaching. The prevalence of this practice, it is universally known, has frequently been attended with lamentable results to minds of a certain order, especially among the lower orders, even in communities which are not subject to the same circumstances of fearful excitement which then reacted upon the oppressed people of the Cevennes. After the in-

surrection, many of the Cevennese enthusiasts took refuge in England where they continued their prophetical esctacies to the occasion of much public excitement and controversy. Many even of the educated classes in England were carried away by the same delusion, among whom may be mentioned the celebrated mathematician Woodward. One Sir R. Bulkely carried his faith in their prophecies so far that he is said to have gone about in worn out clothes, and to have given as his reason, that the prophets had foretold that his body (which was crooked) should be made straight, and, therefore, that it was not worth while to get new clothes, as they might not fit the new body. Many women and children, both in London and in other parts, became affected in the same manner as the children described in the text. To such a dangerous extent did this epidemic frenzy progress, that sermons were delivered from the pulpits, both of the Church of England and of Dissenting bodies, against the impiety of the false pretenders to Prophetical powers.

During the course of the controversy, the most rigorous and hostile examination was instituted into the lives and conduct of the prophets, who were also attacked by some who had once been their disciples. It is impossible that such means as those imputed to Du Serre could have been resorted to without discovery in order to produce the same results in England. But I cannot find that such were even imputed to them, or that any allusion was made to the practices of Du Serre, which would certainly have been urged against these Prophets if the subsequent imputation against Du Serre had then been current. These considerations will much confirm our natural repugnance to resort to that hypothesis of which M. Sue has availed himself with so much artistical skill and power, though they leave untouched the fearful psychological phenomena upon which that hypothesis

is built. For further information on this curious and painful question see "Warnings of the Eternal Spirit. By the mouth of his servant John surnamed Lacy (an English gentleman who commencing as their pupil finally out did the French Prophets in every extravagance)." London 1708. Also "An answer to several treatises lately published on the subject of the Prophets. By Sir R. Bulkely, Bart." The two last treatises were published by "Ben. Bragge" at the mystical sign of "The Black Raven, Paternoster Row." See also "A Caveat against the new Prophets in two sermons at the Merchant's Lecture in Salter's Hall on the 6th. and 2nd. of January 1708. By Edmund Calamy," which contains a most learned examination of false prophecy in all ages.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE VOICE OF GOD.

A few days had elapsed since Du Serre had revealed to Claudius the terrible mysteries of the Castle of Mas-Arribas.

It was dark; the stifling atmosphere announced a coming storm. About the seventh hour of evening Ephraim was returning to his lonely hut, situated as we know in the midst of the forests of Mount Aygoal.

When the Forest-keeper was at the distance of a few paces from his dwelling, his two dogs began to growl and soon barked furiously.

The keeper put his gun at full cock; at the same moment John Cavalier appeared before him.

His torn and dust-covered dress, his long beard, his neglected hair showed that he had

made a long journey rather as a fugitive than a traveller.

"The Lord be with thee, brother Ephraim!" said Cavalier.

"The Lord be with thee, brother John!" said the Keeper, restoring his gun to his shoulder, "and thy father?"

"He is a prisoner at Pont de Mont-Vert. I came from the Abbey."

"Are many of our brothers captives like him?" asked Ephraim.

"They count more than three-hundred in the *ceps*," answered Cavalier, with a sigh.

The two Cevennese entered the hut of Ephraim.

Lepidoth neighed at the sight of his master. The keeper after having bestowed a few caresses on his horse, made a sign to Cavalier to sit down on a log which he pointed out to him and the conversation continued.

"Since that Archpriest of Baal carried away your father with him a month ago what has become of you, brother John?"

"When I quitted you on the heights over the hollow way of Calvieres, I continued to follow the escort at a distance to Pont de Mont-Vert. Having arrived there, I hid myself in

the environs to try to find means of penetrating to my father and procuring his escape. It was impossible. The Abbey is now fortified; they have set up a draw-bridge and nobody enters without being questioned and searched."

"So you renounce your project?"

"Listen to me, brother Ephraim," said Cavalier in a broken voice, "my grandmother was dragged on the hurdle, my mother is dead, my father is a prisoner, my brothers are fugitives, my goods are confiscated; and," Cavalier added mentally, "Isabelle is seduced. All this misfortune has been caused by the Papists." After a pause he added with a hoarse voice, "Oh I need revenge, a terrible revenge, and I will have it."

Ephraim, shaking his head with a gloomy look answered:

"God has inflicted severe trials upon his servants; they ought to support them without complaint. It is not our own hatreds, but His cause that we must be ready to avenge if He gives the signal."

"Oh I am at present a bad christian, I confess it brother," said Cavalier impatiently, "your sermon is thrown away. This night I will seek my comrades. When our games and

military exercises called us together, they never ceased to repeat to me, 'Cavalier we are devoted to you—Cavalier order and we will obey.' Well I will say to them, my father is a prisoner. Take up your arms and let us tear him from the hands of the Papists."

"An armed revolt," cried Ephraim, "the hour is not yet come."

"If they tell me like you, brother Ephraim, the hour is not yet come," answered Cavalier after a moment's silence, "I will return alone to the Pont de Mont-Vert."

"And what will you do?"

"I will kill the Arch-priest and the Marquis of Florac."

"You will only be a homicide; if thou hadst waited thou wouldst have been the sword of God."

"Wait, wait," cried Cavalier with intense bitterness, "ah! your hair and mine Ephraim will be white, and the voice of God will not have spoken; while, before ten days, mine will have said 'Die!' to that priest and that soldier."

"Thou makest me pity and feel ashamed for thee," said Ephraim with a cold contempt; "thou art only an angry child. Go, renounce

the glory of serving the Lord for the sake of serving thine own hatred; go, thou wilt lament but it will be too late; for I tell thee that if the time is not yet come it is at hand; the harvest is ripe and awaits only the sharp sickle. Why wouldst thou hasten the signal before its hour?'

"And who assures you that the signal is about to be given?"

"Everything assures me," rejoined Ephraim, "everything assures me. The noise of the wind in the forests—the roaring of the torrent on its rocks—the great voices of the desert—the rumbling of the mountain in the silence of the night—the flames which shine upon its crest in the darkness. Everything tells me that the time is at hand; even to the very neighings of Lepidoth which grow fiercer, even to the barkings of my dogs which become more boding; even to the red cloud which is often wont to come over my eyes like a wave of blood."

As he spoke thus, Ephraim drew himself up to his full height, his eyes sparkled, his nostrils swelled, his hair and beard seemed to bristle, his whole form and features were enobled, even to beauty by a dark and wild enthusiasm.

Cavalier looked at him in silence. Although struck with the energy of Ephraim's words, he saw nothing in them but a state of superstitious excitement which he cursed because it thwarted his own designs.

"Listen, listen!" said Ephraim.

It was the distant rolling of the thunder repeated by the echoes of the mountain and the forest.

Ephraim arose and pushed open the door of his hut.

From the platform on which it was built was seen afar off the top of the mountain crowned by the Castle of Du Serre. A winding path led to it over the shattered peaks of Aygoal. The last streaks of day faded in the west; the darkness thickened apace; and night rapidly rushed down.

White clouds, marbled with purple, were piled heavily above the towers of the Castle which arose white and wan, like spectres, against the thunder clouds.

The peals, hoarse and prolonged, became more and more frequent; and the heavens were now rent with dazzling lightnings.

"The storm will be terrible," said Cavalier.

"Perhaps a voice will at length issue from

that cloud," answered Ephraim, and he fell again into contemplative silence.

As soon as the night had set in, the tempest burst forth in all the majesty of its fury.

The two Cevennese beheld this sublime spectacle with very different thoughts.

Cavalier, borne to the ground by the treachery of Isabelle, by the astounding calamities which had fallen, in such rapid succession, upon his family, and almost certain that the people would continue to resign themselves to martyrdom, felt himself in extreme despair.

In such a condition, the least reverse must have depressed, the least success have elevated his soul. Such was his character, rather enterprising than obstinate, rather adventurous than firm, rather intrepid than resolute.

If the youth of the Cevennes refused to arm themselves and to follow him to Pont de Mont-Vert, Cavalier relied on asking a fruitless revenge from murder, and then abandoning himself to Fate. His visions of glory had already fled like empty dreams; urged by personal feeling, wanting in faith to the sacredness of the cause which he defended, Cavalier could not refresh himself daily at the one true source

of constancy which cannot be shaken, and hope which cannot be conquered, which gives to the believer a strength not of this world.

Ephraim on the contrary was always assured of the triumph which the Reformed Religion was to obtain over Popery.

Du Serre, whom he had lately seen, and for whom he professed a great veneration, had imparted to him mysteriously some dreams and some strange visions which appeared to announce the approaching deliverance of the Lord's people.

The mind of the Keeper was thus prepared to accept, as supernatural and divine, all the phantoms evoked by the diabolical genius of the glass-maker. Ephraim, a stranger to every interest of pride or ambition, became daily more and more possessed with the fixed and eternal idea, *that the day was at hand when he would he ordered to exterminate the enemies of the Lord.* Taking the ardour of his own ferocious disposition, which impelled him to these ideas of massacre, for the inspirations of heaven, he would have committed fearful crimes with a horrible tranquillity. But, whether a martyr or an executioner, always the blind instrument of an omnipotent and mysterious will, Ephraim

was destined never to feel a single moment of weakness, of hesitation, or of despair.

The storm still increased; it did not rain; the darkness was intense.

All at once, a singular phenomenon attracted the attention of Cavalier and Ephraim.

The towers of Du Serre's castle, which for some time they had ceased to distinguish, suddenly blazed forth from the midst of the darkness.

Streams of sulphuric light gushed from its casements, like so many gigantic lightnings. Blue flames, wavering in the wind, ran upon the roofs of the building.

"The castle of Du Serre lightens," said Ephraim, with a profound emotion, almost of fear.

"He is doubtless working at his glass-works,' said Cavalier, who saw nothing supernatural in this spectacle.

"And at what glassworks was the Lord working, when the mount of Sinai was girt with lightnings and with thunders?" asked Ephraim, in a holy indignation. "Thou desirest, sayest thou, that the times were come, and thou shuttest thine eyes to the light which shows thee that they come. Thou shuttest

thine eyes to the sounds which cry aloud unto thee that they come. Is it not God who kindles these flames on the house of his worthy servant Abraham, who, by the holiness of his life, is as much above us as the cedar is above the grass of the field? Do they not say that he is visited of the spirit of God? Have not prophets announced that the day of the Lord shall be a day of trouble and distress, a day of clouds and thick darkness, a day of the trumpet and alarm against the fenced cities and against the high towers?"

At this moment, by a strange coincidence, at which Cavalier himself was astounded, during one of the intervals of profound silence between the rolling of the thunder, a great sound of clarions, borne from the castle by the wind, made the forests re-echo.

It was a formidable and a solemn sound. Three times it burst forth in a martial flourish, grave, sonorous, and prolonged; three times that flourish was repeated to infinitude by the thousand voices of the mountain-echoes.

"Hearest thou? hearest thou?" exclaimed Ephraim, in a blaze of enthusiasm; then falling on his knees, he said in a low and

concentrated voice: "Lord! Lord! the day of thy wrath at length hath come!"

Without attributing this strange incident to a miracle, Cavalier could not overcome his emotion, when he heard the invisible trumpets sound forth again between two claps of thunder, in the midst of that night of storms.

Ephraim still prayed, kneeling on the threshold of his door.

Cavalier, yielding at once to a religious impulse and to an indefinable presentiment of hope, knelt down by the Keeper's side.

New prodigies appeared.

An immense pillar of fire, clear and brilliant, shot skyward from the top of one of the towers.

Despite this terrible storm, there was scarcely a breeze in the air, the dazzling flame seemed to tower to the clouds, its reflection illuminated the castle, the woods, the mountains, the horizon, spreading its red light to the very bounds of the two Cevennes.

Seen by this light, Mount Aygoal presented a spectacle at once magnificent and terrible.

Suddenly a multitude of moving points

luminous and blue as the wandering fires of the marsh, ran rapidly, either over the forest and the steep sides of the mountain, or along the path which led to the castle.

By the light of the pillar of fire, which still continued to burn, the two Cevennese saw the sudden apparition in the distance of several figures dressed in white; a sort of radiant crown, of phosphoric light, beamed around their long, dishevelled air.

Ephraim was struck with a giddy faintness; everything which he saw appeared to him as so many manifestations of the divine Will.

The pillar of fire vanished; the flourishes of the trumpets were heard no more; the tempest redoubled its thunders and its lightnings. Still, here and there were heard at intervals indistinct and distant cries.

In its rapid fall, the road which led to the castle skirted the hut of the Forester.

By the almost unintermittent blaze of the lightnings, Ephraim and Cavalier saw one of the figures which they had perceived in the distance precipitately descending the road above them.

It was a boy of about fifteen years of age;

his long robe waved around him, his hair shone in the darkness, he was as pale as a spectre.

He passed rapidly, and cried out in a loud voice raising his arms to heaven, 'To arms To your tents, O Israel!'

Then he disappeared, rushing past them at full speed and following the defiles of the mountain which led to the plain.

Other forms passed in like manner, without stopping.

Some cried wildly: "I will utterly root out in the valley of the Idol all them that dwell therein; the Lord hath said it."

Others: "Beat your ploughshares into swords, and your pruning hooks into spears; let the weak say I am strong."

These: "I will send a fire into the house of Hazael, which shall devour the palaces of Benhadad."

Those: "Let the heathen be wakened and come up to the valley of Jehosaphat, for there will I sit to judge all the heathen round about!"

And those: "Kill, kill; let none escape thee; but slay both man and woman, infant and suckling."

"The Pope is Antichrist; behold the hour of the ruin of Babylon!" said one.

"Smite, smite the Papists and utterly destroy them—see that your eye spare them not!" cried the other.

Ephraim with flashing eyes seemed to breathe in carnage.

"Thou hearest it, thou hearest it O Israel!" cried he, "thou wilt arise at the voice of the Prophets! The Aygoal is a new Horeb. The Spirit of the Lord hath passed by the dwelling of brother Abraham; tongues of fire burn upon the forehead of his prophets!" And in his enthusiasm Ephraim recited in a tremendous voice this verse from the Book of Judges,* which seemed so strangely apposite: "And it came to pass when he was come that he blew a trumpet in the mountain of Ephraim, and the children of Israel went down with them from the mount, and he before them."

On this night of storms Du Serre had thrown open the gate of his castle to his victims. Almost drunk with opium, entranced, insane with enthusiastic fervour, their hair shining with a preparation of phosphorus, the little prophets

* Judges, chap. 3, v. 27.

descended from every slope of the mountain and spread themselves over the plain.

This scene had such a miraculous appearance that Cavalier, despite his incredulity, was soon seized with the same mental exaltation as Ephraim. Besides, these cries of war and of rebellion seconded too well his most ardent vows for him to seek to penetrate the cause of these miracles, instead of throwing himself blindly into the new path which Fate seemed to have opened before him.

"Thou sayest well, brother Ephraim, the time is come!" exclaimed Cavalier; "Assemble the woodcutters and goatherds of Mount Aygoal, I will go and raise the youth of the and plain, to-morrow by the break of day all the Cevennes will be in arms!"

At this moment two more Prophets appeared, by the glare of the lightning, at the summit of the road which commanded the Forester's hut; they held each other by the hand.

The undulating folds of their long white robes, streamed behind them, a luminous glory surrounded their beautiful fair hair, their eyes beamed with enthusiasm, a deep purple glowed in their cheeks. They shone, in fine,

with so divine a beauty, that they might have been taken for two radiant arch-angels, swiftly descending the holy mountain.

Cavalier turned pale, it was Celeste and Gabriel.

"My brother, my sister!" cried he stretching out his arms towards the two children at the moment when they passed rapidly before him.

But Celeste and Gabriel, carried away by their ecstacy, did not recognize him.

They cast upon him a look of fire; then, without answering him, they cried out in a sonorous and prophetic voice, pointing with a gesture of command to the road which led to the plain.

"'To arms, Israel! thy warriors shall go down to the valley, like the torrent from the mountains. To arms!'"

Then, still running at full speed, they disappeared in the black depths of the ravine.

"To arms! to arms!" cried Cavalier, stunned, alarmed and bewildered by so many strange events.

And he threw himself precipitately upon the pursuit of Celeste and Gabriel.

"To arms! the dogs shall devour the flesh

of the Moabites! the horses shall swim in blood up to the bridle-rein! Here, Lepidoth! Here, Raab! Here Balak!" cried Ephraim in a voice of thunder.

And he sprang upon his horse, without even bridling it, he called his two dogs, which raised a ferocious barking, took in one hand his long musket, and in the other his flaming pine-torch, and, risking himself upon the steep side of the mountain, with a frightful intrepidity, he galloped on the traces of the prophets, crying aloud with all his strength:

"To arms, Israel, to arms!"

At this moment, the storm redoubled its fury; and a thunderbolt fell upon the Castle of Mas-Arribas.

CHAPTER XIV.

TOINON THE PSYCHE.

WHILST the religious insurrection is raising the population of the Cevennes, we will lead the reader to a modest Inn of Alais; a town situated about ten leagues from the theatre of the scenes, which we have just described.

This Inn, whose pious sign, was "The Pastoral Crook," was held by a good Catholic, of the name of Thomas Rayne.

Without doubt travellers of distinction had just arrived, for a post chaise from which the horses had just been taken off, stood before the door; there also were seen horses foaming with sweat, a postilion counting the money, which he had just received, and a footman dressed as a courier, who assisted a smart

and wicked looking servant girl, a real Marton of the old comedy, to unload some packing-cases.

A young man, very short and fat, of a plebeian and consequential appearance, dressed in a travelling costume, ridiculously overlaid with lace, surveyed this operation.

Fearing that one of the cases placed upon the imperial was not carried with sufficient care, the fat young man got up resolutely on one of the wheels of the chaise, and siad to the footman: "*Tête bleu!* take care then, thou Mascarille, that case holds Martial's perfumes and—"

"I have already begged Monsieur not to call me *thou*," said the magnificent footman, interrupting his master with an air which united respect and insolence, "I only quitted the establishment of Monseigneur the Duke de Nevers, and entered Monsieur's, upon that condition."

"Well, well, it shall not occur again, Mascarille; only take good care of that case," said the young man with a blush.

"Then you do not know, Monsieur Taboureau," said the lady's maid, a little brunette, with a malicious smile, which showed two rows of teeth of the whitest enamel, "you do not

know that M. de Mascarille only permits his masters to speak to him by *thee* or *thou* when they happen to be Dukes? and I am not quite sure whether he grants this privilege to Dukes of creation by patent."

"Hold your tongue, Zerbinette," said M. Taboureau, angrily.

At this moment, a voice of the most charming tone uttered these words with increasing impatience:

"Monsieur Taboureau! Monsieur Taboureau! Monsieur Taboureau!"

At the first summons, the happy possessor of the noble name of Taboureau, had quickly raised his head to the window from which the voice appeared to proceed, and had exclaimed: "I am here, fair Psyche," and he had lost his balance; at the second he had jumped heavily off the wheel, unhappily bringing down with him the case of perfumes which he was holding, and which broke with a dull crash; and finally, at the third, he had rushed into the inn, shouting out by way of answer:

"Here I am! here I am! here I am!" For the pretty voice still called for Monsieur Taboureau, and began to reach a diapason not many notes below anger.

When M. Taboureau entered the best room of the inn, Toinon the Psyche, for it was her, was in no small passion at the slowness of her fat cavalier.

Toinon was about twenty years of age; her small and pretty figure possessed all the graces of youth, and was of a perfection so ideal, that Louis XIV., before whom Toinon had represented Psyche in the interlude of Moliere which bears that name, could not help saying, when he saw this adorable creature dance:

"That is Psyche herself!"

Since that day, the fashionable world knew Toinon by no other name than that of Psyche, and she soon eclipsed those famous female opera-dancers, Pecourt and Damatins, till then without rivals in the dance of the Sylphides of the *Statue of Gold*, a ballet of the time.

It was impossible to imagine anything more charming, and at once more arch and more innocent, than the bright and pretty countenance of Toinon. Her hair of a bright chesnut glossed with gold, surrounded her forehead of snow. Under two small brown eye-brows with long, black, and silken eye-lashes, were two large eyes of a grey-blue which could, at the caprice of their mistress, sparkle with malice,

or drown themselves in languor. A little saucy, mocking, insolent nose, whose delicate tip, which owned a ravishing little upward curve, had an imperceptible movement at the least emotion, relieved with its own *piquant* attraction this delicious physiognomy, round, white, and rosy, whose full, moist, cherry lips breathed malice and voluptuousness.

Toinon knew neither her father nor her mother. Her story was simple. A foundling in Paris, picked up by some mountebanks in a street of the Marais, she had gone about with their company till she was fourteen. One day Feuillet, a celebrated choregraph and ballet-master of the Hotel de Bourgogne, saw Toinon dance on the Place Royale; struck with her grace and prettiness, he persuaded the mountebanks, for a consideration, to part with her in his favour. In a little time, thanks to the cares of her able master, Toinon made rapid progress, appeared in all the interludes, and was at length distinguished by the King, who with a word made the girl's fortune by naming her *Psyche.*

From that word, from that day, Toinon was all the fashion.

In point of morals, Psyche was very much

of the school of Marion Delorme and Mademoiselle de l'Enclos; and like her rivals she did not pique herself on constancy, while like them also Toinon had always sought or chosen her preferences from the very highest class. Her last love, or rather the first and only passion which she had felt in her life, was for the Marquis Tancred de Florac, whom we have seen at the head of the dragoons of St. Sernin, acting as the escort of the Arch-Priest. The Marquis was in every respect capable of inspiring such an attachment. No one was more celebrated for the curling amplitude of his blonde perruques, for the gay audacity of his neck-frills *a-la-gourgandine*, for the magnificence of his equipages, his dresses, and his lace. To quote an author of that period "He was of Malines lace from his neck to his garters, and could make weapons of seduction out of his snuff and pulviolio boxes, and his very watches: they were of such furious good taste." Always sprinkled with Spanish snuff, always drunk, always gambling, a skilful academist, a formidable hero in the tennis-court, playing the lute like an angel, and dancing a *courrant* or a *pas de caractére* like Etang himself, the Marquis Tancred, sarcastic,

bold and brilliant, had intrigues without number, but only with the flower of the Court ladies, shunning the wives of professional people and the shop-ocracy, and actresses, like the plague.

Toinon had often sighed as she gazed at the handsome Tancred, when he came to display his buckles, his ribands, and his perruque on the benches of the Play-house from whence he interrupted the actors with the greatest effrontery. But the Marquis had remained marble to all the coquettish advances of Psyche.

So scornful an indifference must have necessarily exasperated the vain and ardent disposition of Toinon. She exerted all her attractions so long and well that the handsome Tancred was made happy almost against his will. His success made no alteration in the airs of contempt with which he continued to crush down the poor girl. Whether it was anger, the spirit of contradiction or true love, in spite of the insolence and severities of the Marquis, this girl who had never recognised any other control than that of her changeful fancies, felt for this nobleman an attachment profound and jealous but humble and resigned. She experienced in fine all the violent symptoms of a

first love. The Court gentry who formed her ordinary society were by degrees banished. Rich enough to leave the stage, Toinon lived in retirement, happy, madly happy, whenever Tancred deigned to give her an hour without rallying her too cruelly on her tastes of "a repentant Magdalen."

This connection, careless and almost brutal on the side of Tancred, timid and devoted on that of Toinon, lasted three months. At the end of that time the Marquis was obliged to rejoin his regiment in the Cevennes.

The despair of Psyche was the more bitter because the Marquis burst into fits of laughter when she spoke of the dreadful grief which she felt at parting from him.

One day she had carried her impertinence so far as to burst into tears, but the Marquis had formally declared to her: *Primo*, that the brightest eyes in the world became frightful when they were red; *secundo*, that these airs of a deserted Ariadne which the opera dancer permitted herself on his account, compromised him strangely. Since that day Toinon always tried to appear clothed with smiles when Tancred came.

The Marquis departed, Toinon suffered ex-

cruciating anguish; her love so excited her that at the risk of being mercilessly driven away, she resolved to go to rejoin the Marquis, which she did.

This was the purpose for which she had taken Claude Taboureau for her knight errant.

The latter, the son of a farmer of taxes and customs, had inherited an enormous fortune. Wishing to play the great lord, Taboureau at first passionately in love with Toinon had begun by offering her Golcondas; so Toinon had put him to the door like a little shop-keeper as he was.

But at the moment of setting out for the Cevennes, thinking the journey dangerous for two unprotected women, for she took with her her lady's maid, Zerbinette, Psyche sent for Taboureau, and said to him:

"Monsieur Taboureau, you tell me that you love me."

"More than my whole soul, fair Psyche. As surely as that there is none but you on earth to dance *the Sissone* and the *Tortille*; I am devoted soul and body to you."

"Prove it to me; I am going into Lanquedoc to join the Marquis of Florac; I am afraid of

being alone in my chaise with Zerbinette; be my travelling companion."

"Cruel tigress! what do you propose to me?"

"Yes or no Monsieur Taboureau, I speak to you frankly; make your own decision."

After the most mortifying reflexions for his own vanity, Taboureau had ended by accepting the proposal of Toinon, thinking that nothing would be more fashionable than to be able to say to his friends, as he walked the Tuileries in the alley of control, (now the alley by the river side) "I am going to the country to-morrow with the Psyche."

He consented then to act as Toinon's cicisbeo, and set out with her, taking his tall valet, Mascarille, who rode courier before the chaise, and whom he had seduced with no small pecuniary bribe, from the establishment of Monseigneur the Duke of Nevers.

During the whole journey, there was nothing but pleasantry from Toinon and her maid on the enormous corpulence of Claude, who nevertheless contracted himself as well as he could into the smallest possible compass in a corner of the chaise, not to squeeze Zerbinette, who sat between him and Psyche.

At last the three travellers reached Alais,

where Toinon relied on obtaining the necessary information to find the Marquis, for she had learnt at Montpellier that the dragoons had already marched to the mountains of the Cevennes.

Such was Toinon the Psyche, who had just called with such impatience for Taboureau.

The cicisbeo precipitately entered the room of the inn, and found Toinon more pretty and seducing than ever, in her long travelling dress of pearl-grey taffetas, and her hood of the same stuff and colour.

CHAPTER XV.

NEWS.

"MONSIEUR TABOUREAU, you are insufferable; this is the tenth time that I have called for you," said Toinon, tapping the ground in anger with the end of her little foot.

"Tigress!" said the cicisbeo, quite out of breath, "unless one was a sylph or a bird, it is impossible to have come quicker."

"Oh, certainly you are as aerial and as agile as a sylph, there is no question as to that —what o'clock is it?"

Claude took a watch, or pocket-clock as it was then called, out of his waistcoat-pocket. It was about two inches thick. Having consulted it, he answered: "Three hours and a quarter after noon."

"We will ask our road, and at four we will

set out again," said Toinon, with an air of decision.

"Set out! At four o'clock!" cried Taboureau, "but, tigress, you can't think of it. We have not breakfasted, we have not dined, you don't even wish us to sup."

"Oh, in heaven's name, eat, breakfast, dine, and sup as much as you please. But be ready at four, that is all I ask of you."

"In the first place, lovely tigress, it will be very hard for me, I fancy, to find the materials for three meals at this miserable inn; it is the very outside if I can get the means of one; but all your cases are unpacked, and—"

"Well, you will pack them again; that's all."

"But, mademoiselle!" cried Taboureau, impatiently.

"What does this mean, sir," said Psyche, with an air of majestic passion, "do you hesitate to obey me? Why do you remain? Who keeps you near me? If my manner of travelling seems inconvenient to you, go away; but if you remain do not thwart me."

"But since we left Paris, recollect that you only stayed at Lyons one night; you must

be horribly fatigued; rest here at least for a few hours."

"I am not fatigued. The desire of reaching M. de Florac gives me a burning restlessness, it is true; but I shall be in the same state till I see him, till the moment that I know whether he will allow me to remain with him—I must arrive as soon as possible."

"You have not the shadow of pity," cried the unhappy Taboureau; you do not think, cruel woman as you are, all that you make me suffer by speaking to me thus."

"And why should I speak otherwise to you? Did I conceal from you the end of my journey? Did I conceal from you my love, the only love which I have felt and will ever feel?" said Psyche sorrowfully. "I have addressed myself to you as to a friend, as to a brother. You have shown yourself hitherto generous and good; if the part wearies you, support it no longer. Go."

"Go! go! you know well that I cannot go. An infernal spell attaches me to you. It is in vain that I repeat to myself that you do not love me, and will never love me, that you are bewitched by another. It is all of no use; I

am in your presence, that enchants me and I forget everything else."

"Come, come, my good M. Taboureau," said the syren, assuming her sweet voice and giving her white and delicate hand to be kissed by Claude, "do not deceive yourself; you remain with me because you know well that I love you as my best friend, and that, in default of a more tender sentiment, such friendship also has its value."

"But you really love him?" said poor Taboureau, with an accent of despair.

"I love him, O I love him! But no, no, you will reproach me again with being cruel. Come, my friend, let us talk no more of this."

"You are right, tigress, for it is frightful. I feel myself devoured with jealousy and envy, and unhappily sorrow does not make me thin. I believe, *tete bleu!* that I grow fat upon downright vexation. But hear my advice, I give it to you for your interest. Without doubt you are always charming, without doubt you are always the adorable Psyche; but you must arrive to *him* clothed in all your charms; well, the fatigue of a long journey, your agitation,

your anxieties, may well have robbed your freshness of its brilliancy while a day or two's rest will restore it to you."

"A mirror, a mirror!" cried Toinon, anxiously.

It was in vain that Taboureau sought a looking-glass in this naked and deserted inn-room. He was going down stairs to take out of the chaise Toinon's travelling dressing-case, when a rather loud noise was heard in the place. oinon ran to the window.

A great number of peasants and shopkeepers were collected on the market place of Alais, and appeared in great agitation. Nearly all belonged to the Catholic religion, and the hoarse murmur of these words was heard:

"To the devil with the psalm singers! Here is civil war again! Why don't they crush at once those accursed fanatics for good and all?"

Some religionists, noticeable by their black or brown dress, listened undauntedly to these hostile manifestations, and surveyed the different groups with a calm, grave look.

Suddenly the townspeople cried with acclamation:

"Long live the dragoons of St. Sernin!"

"Tancred's regiment!" said Toinon, and she listened with the keenest attention.

At this moment appeared, coming down one of the streets, a trooper followed by a trumpet, both wore the uniform of the dragoons of St. Sernin. They could hardly make a way for their horses through the crowd which sorrounded and overwhelmed them with questions.

"Monsieur Dragoon, is it true that the mountaineers have rebelled in the west?"

"Brave trumpeter," said another, "they say that there been terrible miracles on Mount Aygoal. Do you know anything about them?"

"Worthy brigadier, is it true that the Protestants of the Hort-Diou have burnt the Catholic churches of the Plain?"

"Go to the great devil of hell!" cried the Brigadier Larose, by way of answer; and he spurred his charger to make him rear or kick, so as to make way for himself.

Seeing the inutility of his efforts, for the crowd momentarily increased, and appeared resolved to use its strength of inertness to compel the brigadier to tell the news of the insurrection, Larose told his trumpeter to blow

a call or two, in order to command the attention of the townspeople.

"The dragoon is going to speak: silence!" said those in the immediate vicinity of the horseman.

"Ah! ah!" answered the crowd with a murmur of increasing satisfaction; some cries of "Long live the dragoons of St. Sernin," were again heard.

Larose, rising in his stirrups, made a gesture of command, and said in a loud voice:

"Shopkeepers and clodhoppers, I summon you to give me free passage, in the name of the king and of my captain, M. the Marquis of Florac, who have sent me in all haste to Montpellier, to Monseigneur, the King's Lieutenant."

"My dear Taboureau," said Toinon, "go down quickly, to beg that soldier to step up stairs. Here, you will give him this louis. Blessings of heaven!—I shall have news of Tancred."

Taboureau went down stairs sighing, and risked himself in the crowd, in order to approach the dragoon, who continued in vain to demand a passage.

"The dragoon must tell us what has

happened in the west, and in the mountains," cried the most obstinate, pressing round the trooper. Not being able to pass, and wofully irritated, he ordered his trumpet to sound a fresh summons.

"He is about to speak! he is about to speak!" cried the crowd, with an ecstasy of satisfied curiosity.

"Shopkeepers and clowns," said Larose, taking a pistol out of his holsters; "since you persist in pressing about me, like a flock of stray sheep, although I have summoned you in the name of my king and my captain, to let me pass, I will try to send before me, the ball in this pistol, by way of forlorn hope, to see if it will make way for me."

And the brigadier cocked his pistol, after having ordered his trumpeter to do the like.

The effect of this threat was instantaneous and wonderful, the waves of the crowd flowed back rapidly from the centre to the circumference, for the neighbours of the brigadier feared to be the first hit; the two dragoons, who had thus cut themselves out, crossed the place without difficulty.

When they had arrived before the door of the

Inn, Taboureau approached Larose, put a louis in his hand, and said to him :

" My brave dragoon, there is a fair lady up stairs who wishes to speak to you about your captain, and who hopes that you and your trumpet, will accept some refreshments, of which you must stand in need."

" My trumpet stands in need of nothing but minding my horse," said Larose throwing his bridle to his comrade and alighting. " So bring me quickly to this fair lady, my good sir, for I must be at Montpellier this very night."

And Larose drew himself up gallantly in his uniform, brushed his doublet with the end of his buff glove, shook the dust off his jack-boots, passed his long blond moustache between the thumb and fore-finger of his left hand, and followed Taboureau.

When the dragoon entered the room, he saw, not without sundry awakenings of appetite, on a little table very well set out, a pie with a golden-coloured crust, a loaf as white as snow, and a dusty bottle of Burgundy which Zerbinette, the little dark-eyed brunette, was wiping with her white hands.

These provisions had been taken by Psyche's

orders from the canteen with which Tabourcau prudently garnished one of the boots of the chaise.

The cicisbeo made a dreadful grimace when he saw the only hope of his supper exposed to the soldier's voracity.

"But, tigress," said he in a low voice, approaching Toinon, "we have nothing remaining but this pie of beccafico's dressed with rosemary, and such a fellow is incapable of appreciating its delicacy; I am myself as hungry as a wolf, and—"

Zerbinette, with an air of coquetry, made the cork fly out by giving it a tap with the end of her pretty fingers and poured out a glorious bumper for the dragoon; he, still standing, took the glass in his right hand, made a salute with his left, and after drinking the wine at a draught, said gallantly to Zerbinette by way of an *impromptu:*

> "I drink to your bright eyes, my dear!
> But zounds! I wish 'twere better cheer."

Then, examining a ruby drop which remained at the bottom of his glass, the Brigadier added with the air of a connoiseur, making his tongue clack at the same time against the roof of his mouth:

"Well, that is a little wine of the country which might teach a fool to drink."

"The savage!" cried Taboureau. "True nectar of Clos de Vougeout, from the cellar of Villandry, of the vintage of 1684! And he calls that wine of the country—But it is the wine of Cahors which you want to scrape your throat of iron, for you have about as much taste as a funnel."

"Help him, Zerbinette," said Toinon, "after a long ride in the mountains he must be hungry, the poor soldier!"

"Poor soldier!" said Taboureau, and he added: "I can assure you, fair Psyche, that a journey in a post-chaise, when one has neither breakfasted nor dined, is as good, at least as a ride in the mountains, to give an appetite."

And the Cicisbeo beheld, with a mournful look, Zerbinette cut up the pie, and give a great slice to the soldier.

"Do not you stand upon any ceremony, my worthy sir," said Larose, making a sign to the Cicisbeo to take a seat in front of him. "If your heart bids you, sit there; there will be plenty for all; set to work."

But Claude, thinking the company of a

soldier beneath him, thanked Larose drily, saying to himself in a half-whisper:

"Confound the rascal who does the honours of my pie. What next?" Then he added, seeing with what voracity Larose regaled himself: "This glutton thinks no more of what he eats than if it was the commonest stew."

Toinon, hoping that her gracious and substantial hospitality would expand the heart of Larose, soon addressed to him, almost in a breath, the following questions:

"Tell me, Monsieur Dragoon, when did you leave the Marquis of Florac? Where is he now? Is he well? Does he run no danger?"

Larose answered, with his mouth full, it is true, but, nevertheless, very categorically to this string of interrogatories:

"I left M. the Marquis at three o'clock this morning; he is at Pont de Mont-Vert with his company; he is as sound as a bell, and runs no danger, unless the bawlers in broad-brimmed hats make some ugly attempt on the Abbey."

"What do you say? just heaven!" cried the terrified Toinon, "what attempt? explain yourself.

After hesitating a moment, Larose said in a low voice to Toinon, pointing to Taboureau. "Listen my pretty lady, there is one too many here; that fat fellow in the gilt doublet who follows each of my mouthfuls with his eyes, like a dog who is watching his master eat; send him to keep company with my trumpet and my horse; that will amuse all three, and when we are alone with Mademoiselle (he pointed to Zerbinette) I will tell you all."

"Taboureau my friend," said Psyche, "see then if they have thought of giving anything to that poor trumpet?"

"O *tetebleu*! madam, that *poor* trumpet cannot want anything, this other *poor* man has just eaten for both," cried Taboureau quite unhinged. "To the devil with such *poor* soldiers."

"I must speak alone with this soldier," said Toinon, "go; I beg you, go."

"But, *morbleu*!"

"Be it so; then I will go into another room," said Toinon with impatience and half rising.

Zerbinette opened the door and Taboureau went out in the heighth of indignation.

The Brigadier watched his exit with a frown and said to Toinon:

"If I had not got something still to say to this pie, to this bottle, and to you my pretty lady, I would just now have invited that fat paunch to a bout with the rapier, to teach him to refuse to drink a glass of wine with a drágoon of Saint Sernin."

"Do not attend to such impertinences;" said Toinon, "but answer me what danger can M. de Florac incur?"

"Well then my pretty lady, although my captain has forbidden me to tell what is going on in the West before my arrival at Montpellier, I see that these clowns know very nearly all, and to-morrow it will be no secret; so that a few hours more or less make no difference and besides you will not repeat to any one what I am going to tell you?"

Toinon made a sign in the negative.

"Know then," continued Larose, "that the psalm-singers are in full revolt, all the Cevennes are in arms, that is to say are in sticks, flails and pitchforks for the rebels have not they say a hundred muskets among them. But it's all the same, these bumpkins are so savage that they come, head down at you, with a scythe stuck on the end of a pole, and shove it, in their stupid way, through your body with as much satisfac-

tion as if it was a true arm of war, like an assagay or a partizan! it is enough, my little lady, to make one laugh," added the Brigadier shrugging his shoulders with a gesture of profound contempt.

"Holy Virgin! it sets one's flesh a crawling!" said Zerbinette shuddering.

"But does M. de Florac run any risk of being attacked by these wretches?" cried Toinon with increasing impatience.

"My captain runs no risk on that account my pretty lady, but he may be called upon at any time to cut down those vagabonds, seeing that he is at Pont de Mont-Vert with the Arch-priest of the Cevennes and a string of Huguenot prisoners in the ceps. Now, counting those vermin of Miquelets, there are not five hundred troops in the Abbey; and they say that these fanatics number already more than two thousand in arms and that they intend to burn the abbey, deliver their friends, massacre the Arch-priest and do as much to my captain and old Paul whom they take for the devil in person. Excepting that, there is nothing that one would call danger; but for prudence sake my captain has sent me to Montpellier, to M. de Baville and M. de Broglie to ask for reinforcement."

"Is the Abbey of Pont Mont-Vert very far from here?" asked Toinon, with intense interest.

"It is twelve leagues, my pretty lady; but what roads! it is just like going to the devil."

"Do the rebels occupy the country which leads to the Abbey?" asked Toinon in anxious thought.

"Not to-day at least, my pretty lady, they dare not descend as yet to the flat country, for they say that their prophets, as they call them, have forbidden them to set foot out of the diocese of Mende."

"What prophets, Monsieur Dragoon?" asked Zerbinette, while her mistress seemed absorbed in her reflections.

"As to the prophets," answered Larose, with an air of mystery, "that's devil knows what, that's magic. I have never seen any of them myself; but a master of the second company of Saint Sernin, old La Lanterne, saw one eight days ago perched on the top of a rock. It seems, you see, that these prophets are a set of urchins possessed by Satan, who blow fire out of their mouths and noses, together with a very nasty smoke, which makes these savages of Huguenots respect and

cherish them. It appears that a few days ago, the devil unkennelled a whole pack of them, in the midst of a row like hell's delight."

Zerbinette clasped her hands in terror, saying:

"But, Mr. Soldier, they are perhaps goblins,"

"They must be something of that sort, for old La Lanterne, who fought in Holland against the English, says that the prophets are of the same breed as those British heretics, and that before firing at a prophet or an Englishman, you ought always to make the sign of the cross on the butt end of your gun. As for the chiefs of the Huguenot rebels, there is among them a fellow whom M. the Marquis knows well, a certain John Cavalier, who was a baker at Anduze, and whom the captain nearly ordered to be shot three years ago. He commands the youth of the plain and the towns; the other chief of these brigands, who commands the mountaineers, is an old forester called the Bear of Aygoal."

"Where shall I find a guide to lead me to the Abbey of Pont de Mont-Vert?" asked Toinon, all of a sudden, who had not heard what Larose had been saying.

"To go to Pont de Mont-Vert! you, my pretty lady!" exclaimed he, "you can't think of that!"

"Once more, where can I find a guide?"

"To go to Pont de Mont-Vert!" repeated Larose, "but recollect, my pretty girl, that it is almost a miracle that I and my trumpet were not attacked and massacred on our road from the Abbey. This rebellion takes and spreads like tinder, there is no conceiving it; the rebels grow up in a night in every direction like mushrooms; perhaps to-morrow the roads will not be practicable without an escort, especially going back to the west; but going down on the side of Montpellier I think everything is quiet as yet, whilst over there," and the dragoon pointed to the direction in which the sun was beginning to decline, "may the devil burn me if I go back without a detachment well-armed, with a vidette on the vanguard, and another on the rear."

"Then it is this evening, this moment that I must set out," said Toinon, "since the roads are still clear."

Zerbinette looked at her mistress with an air of incredulity and terror.

"But you don't know what kind of people

those brigands are, my pretty lady," said Larose, stupified at the resolution of Toinon, "you do not know—"

Toinon interrupting him, took another piece of money, gave it to him, and said:

"Thanks good soldier, I do not wish to detain you longer and to increase your danger; adieu." Then, on second consideration, she added; "since you say the road is not safe it may be possible that I should never see M. de Florac again; but you will certainly see him, well then!" said she taking a little gold box from her pocket, "you will give him this, you will tell him that you saw me at the moment when I was setting out to try to rejoin him. You will also tell him above all that if I have not been able to reach him (and she dried a tear which stood in her large eyes) it was neither for want of will or courage."

Larose affected in spite of himself took the trinket from her hands and looking at her with a pity mingled with respect, said to her gravely, "Madam, Larose must have both a wooden arm and a timber leg not to execute the orders which you give him for his captain."

After having made a military salute, the Brigadier left, so troubled that he did not even

address to Zerbinette a gallant distich by way of adieu.

Mounting his horse immediately, and wishing to make up for the time which he had lost, he took the road to Montpellier at full gallop, followed by his trumpet.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE GUIDE.

When the Brigadier had left, Zerbinette said to her mistress: "I hope madam you have no serious intention of committing this folly?"

"What folly, mademoiselle?"

"But madame, the folly of going to this Abbey to seek M. the Marquis. You expose yourself to so many dangers, it is tempting Providence and if we were to fall in the hands of the heretics! Mascarille told me things just now enough to make one tremble."

Psyche shrugged her shoulders and answered her maid very drily.

"Tell the landlord to step up immediately."

Zerbinette left the room with a very bad grace, and conveyed the orders of her mistress to the landlord of the Pastoral Crook, the

worthy Thomas Rayne who was occupied in receiving Taboureau's complicated directions touching the supper.

"One moment," said the Cicisbeo who was examining a superb fish, "since a happy fortune has made this trout fall from heaven into your larder, do not forget to treat it as it merits and to dress it in a stew of white wine well seasoned; add to it some white onions stuck with cloves, that is indispensable. You will serve up the roast quails on a slice of toast well wrapped in vine leaves, and then by way of side-dish, what you call a *farol* of wild plums, though I am exceedingly suspicious of that heavy country cake," added Taboureau pointing with a dissatisfied look to the cake ready for the oven, "it looks very far from being puffed enough."

"Monseigneur can depend upon me for the *farol;* it is a dish worthy of Gods and Monseigneur;" said the host bowing respectfully to Taboureau whose splendid dress imposed upon him wonderfully.

"Serve up as soon as possible, landlord, for I am dying of hunger. In the mean time I will take a turn in the town to pass the time," said Claude, leaving the inn, and he added,

"I hope at least this time, there will be no *poor soldier* to eat up my supper."

Then Thomas Rayne went upstairs to Psyche —"I want a guide who can conduct me to Pont Mont-Vert, and set out immediately," said Toinon.

"Go to Pont Mont-Vert, madam! but you do not know that the heretics of the west—"

"I know all that they say, but never mind. I must set out instantly for Pont Mont-Vert, and find a guide. Do you know one?"

Thomas Rayne twisted his cap into every possible shape, scratched his ear, and said at last:

"People are so afraid of the Fanatics since they have assembled in arms, that you could not find any one for gold or silver to set foot out of the town."

"But the postillion who brought me—could he not drive me to Pont de Mont-Vert?"

"The postillion! he leave the place! and now that the night is falling! Ah, madam! it is easy to see that you are a stranger. If their saddles were covered with gold pieces, the postillions would not stir. And the here-

tics! you do not know that the sight of a carriage attracts them as honey does flies."

"What cowardice!" cried Toinon, stamping with her foot in anger, "not to find one man of courage and resolution."

"If madam would wait till the day after to-morrow, there will be a convoy of muleteers from Nantes, who are going to Rouergue. If they dare, in spite of the rumours which are abroad, to venture to the west, then you can accompany them."

"But an hour's, but a minute's delay is fatal to me! I will give you, I say, twenty, thirty louis if necessary—only find me a guide, a guide, for the love of heaven!"

After some reflection, the landlord struck his forehead, and said, "Perhaps the poor young woman in black, who says that she is also much pressed to reach the west, will consent to accompany you, madam."

"Who is this woman?"

"A poor girl dressed in mourning, who travels on foot. She arrived here an hour ago; she is now lying down, but she wishes to set out again at sunset, in spite of all that they can say to her. By St. Thomas, my patron

saint, she seems neither to fear God or devil, fanatic or prophet! What a girl, just heaven! a steel corslet would suit her better than a bodice."

"And where is she going?"

"To Saint Andéol de Clerguemont; that is two leagues from Pont de Mont-Vert. You see, madam, that if she guides you where you want, that will not put her much out of her road."

"And where is this girl? Can I see her? Send her to me," said Toinon, impatiently. "I will pay her whatever she pleases, if she will consent to act as my guide."

Thomas Rayne shook his head.

"This poor girl seems as proud as a Duchess, madam. Seeing that she travelled on foot, and believing her indigent, when she wanted to pay me for the morsel of bread, the glass of water, and the broiled *sardines* which formed her humble meal, I said to her: 'Keep your money, my good girl, Thomas Rayne did not take without a reason his sign of the Pastoral Crook. Pray for me, and I shall be paid for my alms.' But, good heavens! at this mention of prayer and alms, the girl threw me her piece of money, and with it a

look of such anger, that from henceforth I will rather ask for twice their shot from my guests, than make them a present of a glass of water."

"Lead me to this girl," said Toinon, rising and adjusting her hood, "she is proud, so much the better, perhaps she will understand me."

"She is in the little room by the press," said Thomas Rayne. "The road is dark, if Madame will be pleased to follow me, I will show the way."

Toinon followed the landlord. After crossing the court she came to a pretty long passage.

Not over anxious in all probability to find himself with the young girl whom he had involuntarily offended, Thomas stopped, and said in a low voice to Psyche, showing her a door which was half opened:

"That is her room, madam."

And he disappeared.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE CEVENNESE.

TOINON, too full of her own resolution to feel intimidated, pushed the door gently.

Overcome, doubtless by the fatigues of the day, the young girl slept.

She was so handsome, in spite of the poverty of her dress, her beauty possessed such a character of energy and grandeur that Toinon remained a moment stupified with admiration.

This little, dark room received light from a loop-hole, placed high up in the wall, which admitted a strong, because concentrated, light upon the coarse bed on which the girl lay, dressed in a long gown of black camlet, a cloak with a hood of the same stuff called *gault* in Lower Languedoc, was placed near her on a

chair, with her iron-shod staff, a leather knapsack and her dusty sandals.

The noble profile of the girl stood out in relief against the shadow in which she lay; one would have thought it the model of one of the dark and glowing heads of Murillo, or of Zurbaran.

Her forehead was broad, her nose straight and rather long, her lips pouting and fleshy, her chin prominent, and the arch of her orbits almost as straight as the eye-brow of ebony which marked it. Her hair, of a blue-black with a lustrous gloss, a little disordered by the moisture of the water in which the girl had doubtless bathed her face, fell in natural curls round her neck of the perfection of an antique study. The fresh dawn of youth velveted her complexion embrowned by the sun of the South. Though she was pale, the lively brown of her skin announced force and health. She was tall, and her wide shoulders, as well as her robust hips, set off to still greater advantage her finely tapering and graceful figure.

The sleeves of her dress, raised during her sleep, showed her naked round and vigorous arms; one of them hung almost to the ground, the other supported her head.

Her hands and her well-shaped feet, though a little sunburnt, evinced by the elegance of their shape that she was not habitually accustomed to great fatigue, or to severe manual exercise.

Toinon examined in silence, with a curiosity mingled with fear, this wild beauty; suddenly the girl moved, and her face, instead of remaining sideways, was turned full upon her.

Under this new aspect, the expression of her physiognomy appeared to Psyche dark, violent, even menacing.

The sleeper dreamt; a smile of bitterness and pain moved her lips. She contracted her black eyebrows, two or three times, she shook her head upon her pillow, then still dreaming, she said in a low and broken voice the following disjointed words:

"John--no--I am not guilty--Cavalier, I swear it to thee—my father—dead—the Marquis of Florac—wretch—oh!—wretch!—wretch!"—

She pronounced these last words with such increasing energy, with such excitement, that when she pronounced the word 'wretch!' the third time she awoke with a start.

Toinon had never seen her before, but on hearing these words, "The Marquis of Florac,"

and "wretch!" she was convinced by an occult revelation, a true miracle of love, that between this young woman and Tancred, there was some fatal secret.

Toinon had listened to the recital of Larose with devouring attention and anxiety; the least circumstances of his narration had engraved themselves in her memory, and the name of Cavalier, one of the rebel chiefs, had above all remained present to her recollection, as the name of one of the most dangerous enemies of M. de Florac.

Now this girl had also pronounced these words in her sleep, "Cavalier I swear it to you." What mysterious link existed between these three persons—the girl, Cavalier, and Tancred?

Psyche had not penetrated this secret as yet. But by the painful stroke which had just reached her very heart, by the ardor of her hate, her jealousy, her poignant curiosity, and her instinctive fear she felt, from this moment, that Isabelle (for it was her) must be the most deadly enemy of Tancred.

With these fears, Toinon was impelled to try everything in order to persuade Isabelle to act as her guide, hoping to spy out her secret

on the road, and to be able to divert from Tancred, the dangers which she feared.

Isabelle seeing, on awakening, a stranger near her bed, rose hastily. She appeared to Toinon, still taller standing, than lying.

"What do you want?" said Isabelle, hastily, contracting her ebon eyebrows, with a frown, and fixing upon Psyche a look as black and unscrutable as night itself.

"To speak to you," answered Toinon, resolutely, while her large and brilliant eyes of grey, did not drop, beneath the dark look of Isabelle.

These two women of such different natures, the one haughty, tall and vigorous; the other small, light, and active, examined one another in silence. The contrast might have reminded one of a lioness about to roar against a viper.

After this first moment, involuntarily given to the expression of a profound and ill-restrained hatred, Toinon reflected that she had to contend with this woman, in cunning and not in violence, and that it was not by affronting her, that she would persuade her to act as her guide.

Psyche called to her aid, all the resources, all the hypocricies of her profession, the prac-

tised actress timidly cast down her eyes, which soon dimmed their momentary fire's spark of anger, in a tear of angelic sorrow; her childish mouth shaped the most touching, the most ingenuous smile; her two little hands were raised in supplication, she half bent her knees, and said in a sweet voice, trembling with emotion.

"Forgive me, mademoiselle, but I came to ask a great favour from you."

"I am alone—I am poor—I can be of no service to any one," answered Isabelle drily.

"But if you will only consent, you could do everything for me, Mademoiselle," said Psyche kneeling.

"I am a Protestant," said Isabelle, stepping back, and hoping to cut short the interview by that avowal.

"And so am I," said Toinon, in a low voice, making a sign of secrecy.

Psyche had risked this lie without much consideration of the consequences, but she only thought of the present moment, and her mind, excited by the difficulty of her position, had suggested to her on the spot a story of sufficient verisimilitude.

"You are of the Reformed Religion," re-

joined Isabelle in a softer voice, fixing a penetrating look upon Toinon.

"Alas, yes! my mother and my sister are prisoners at Pont de Mont-Vert. I came from Paris to rejoin them, but the postillion who brought me refuses to go further, fearing the rebels as they call them. No one will act as my guide. The landlord tells me that you are going in the direction of Pont de Mont-Vert. For pity's sake let me accompany you. If you have a mother, a sister or a father, mademoiselle, you will understand all I suffer, all I desire!"

And Psyche embraced the knees of Isabelle and shed tears.

"Rise, rise!" said Isabelle with an air of pity; then she added, "I have no sister, I have lost a mother and a father; but you are of our religion and I ought to do for you all that I would do for a sister." Then after a moment's silence she said to Toinon, "it is plain by your accent that you are not of this country."

Psyche, with the presence of mind which danger sometimes gives, answered quickly: "No, we are of Artois. My mother and sisters sought to fly to Geneva; they were arrested in Languedoc and brought prisoners to Pont de Mont-Vert; on learning this misfortune, I set

out from Paris where I lived with one of my aunts, in the company of my brother; a maid-servant and a footman came with me and I come to share the fate of my mother and sisters, to be a prisoner with them, or free with them."

"Poor little thing!" said Isabelle regarding her with emotion, and taking the two little white hands of Toinon in her own brown and vigorous hands; "You are young and pretty, you are doubtless rich and already unhappy—already!" Then as if overcoming a painful thought, Isabelle continued. "But perhaps you will want the courage or the strength to accompany me."

"What do you mean?"

"You must not think of travelling in a carriage, you will find neither a horse nor a postillion to take you. The road which I am going to take lies in the mountains through horrible deserts; but this way greatly shortens the distance, it is lonely and we are almost sure to meet no one."

"And when will you reach Pont de Mont-Vert?"

"To-morrow at sun-set."

"And you will set out this evening?"

"This very hour."

"I go with you. To-morrow I will embrace my mother," said Psyche resolutely.

"Your mother has a noble daughter," said Isabelle gravely.

"I can take with me my two servants and my brother, can I not?" asked Toinon fearing to be alone on the road with Isabelle."

"You had better take no one but your brother; however do as you please. Your brother is doubtless brave and capable of defending you in case of danger?"

This pretended brother was Taboureau; Toinon did not dare to risk a lie so easy to be discovered as an affirmative answer, and said:

"His profession is one of peace and quiet, and—"

"Can he be a minister of our holy religion?" said Isabelle, with astonishment.

Toinon was about to transform Claude Taboureau to a doctor or a lawyer; she thought to do wonders by not contradicting Isabelle and answered, "yes mademoiselle."

"He is a Minister!" cried Isabelle with a respectful admiration, "what, he is one of our holy pastors so devoted to their flocks, and whom the laws proscribe under pain of death! he dares to appear at the moment when our

brethren rise in arms! He dares thus to brave the stake or the wheel. Oh, courageous martyrs of our faith, your blood has been fruitful!" cried the girl raising her eyes and hands to heaven by a movement full of enthusiasm.

Toinon shuddered at her own inprudence, but it was too late. Wishing, nevertheless, to lessen its effect, she said in a low voice to Isabelle:

"Silence, silence! Think if you were overheard! my brother has been obliged to adopt a secular costume, and thus to conceal that he was a minister of the Reformed Religion, in order that he might travel in safety."

"Then he is going to rejoin our brethren in the mountains whilst you are going to your mother and sisters?" said Isabelle, in a lower voice, making at the same time a sign of intelligence to Psyche.

"Yes, yes, but silence!"

"Then let us set out, let us set out," rejoined Isabelle, "it becomes now doubly my duty to guide you, for our friends have been long deprived of their pastors; they will receive the holy word from your brother as the parched and burning earth expects, and receives, the dew of heaven."

Toinon, hastily adjusting her hood, said to Isabelle:

"Wait for me here, I cannot travel in this dress, I am going to ask the landlord to procure for me peasants' dresses for myself and my brother."

"But this disguise will perhaps awaken the suspicion of the landlord!" said Isabelle.

"He thinks that we are catholics, we will set out at night; besides, if necessary, I will purchase his silence with gold."

Isabelle reflected a moment, and said:

"At nightfall then, you will seek me here."

"Here," said Toinon, "and may Heaven one day reward you for what you have done for me."

"I have much to be atoned for," said Isabelle, with a solemn sadness.

Psyche wrapped herself in her cloak, and disappeared.

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE DEPARTURE.

WHEN Psyche returned to her room she found Taboureau busied with the preparations for supper.

"Would you believe it, double tigress?" said the Cicisbeo, "you who refuse me the nourishment both of heart and body—I could obtain here no other light than this smoky and abominable lamp. But, such as it is, it will give light to a tolerable supper which I am going to serve up to you. I hope at least to eat my share of that, and I have need of it, for *tétebleu!* I am dying of fatigue and hunger," added Claude, stretching himself with much complacency in an arm-chair. "And then, after supper, what an excellent night I shall pass in

this inn. Ah! I almost go to sleep already by thinking of it."

There was in the physiognomy, in the accent of Taboureau, such calm, such self-abandonment, such security, it seemed to him so impossible that the least aggression should be attempted upon his supper and his repose, that Toinon foresaw great difficulties to overcome, before persuading her Cicisbeo to follow her that very moment, and to undertake a long journey on foot over the mountains.

Psyche hesitated between two exordiums. Ought she abruptly to make to Taboureau the alarming proposal which we wot of? Ought she, on the contrary, to prepare him for it by little and little? The time pressed, temporizations were not in her character, she decided at last upon the first method of action.

The syren assumed her most melancholy smile, shaded her fine eyes with sorrow, and approaching the arm-chair, in the depth of which Taboureau was ensconced, she leant upon its back in the most graceful of attitudes; thus commanding the unhappy Cicisbeo, she cast upon him an adorable look of arch and supplicating tenderness, saying to him in her sweetest voice, "Listen, my dear Claude,

you must be good and kind enough to make a great sacrifice for my sake."

Taboureau, terrified, felt his heart sink within him; he knew Psyche so well, that on hearing those caressing words, he suspected some new and horrible plot against his appetite or his peace.

He had a trance and a moment of delirium, in which he saw a thousand visionary dragons, which opened enormous mouths, while they glared upon his supper with a greedy eye; recovering his first surprise, he cried out, drawing himself up: "Come, I hope, at any rate, it does not consist of giving part of our supper to some poor soldier."

"No, no, my dear Claude, you shall sup quite at your ease in this arm-chair, and I will even wait on you if you like, as Zerbinette waited on the dragoon."

Taboureau rose to his legs this time, and said to Toinon: "This is not natural, there is something under all this, Psyche; answer, be frank; I am sure you have got something to ask me."

"Well, I confess I had; but it was a folly, don't let us think of it."

"And you have a thousand more reasons

not to do so, if it is anything which can disturb my quiet the least in the world, from now till to-morrow morning at ten or eleven o'clock, for I intend to sleep like a canon of the church, I tell you beforehand. Listen also, fair Psyche, I love you with all my heart, you know it well; amidst all your people of the court or the fashion, all your little fops with big perruques, all your flaming dandies, no one, in spite of your beauty, would have consented, like me, to act as your gentleman-in-waiting, and mark this, a *disinterested* one, very much so. I do not reproach you with what I have done for you, I have acted thus because I chose, I would do the same if I had to do it again. But, *tête bleu*! self-devotion has its bounds. I am not a sylph; I have the coarser appetites of humanity, I confess I even pride myself in them; so I declare to you positively, that neither the King nor you will make me stir from this arm-chair, (and Claude, flinging himself into it, seized fast hold of it,) except to go to supper and bed."

"You are right, my friend," said Psyche softly; "O you have behaved to me nobly, generously. You have done what nobody else would have done; and who else but you would

have consented to become only the *friend* (and she repeated with bitterness), the *friend* of Toinon the Psyche? Who else but you would have taken compassion on the infatuation of my passion? Who else could have understood that if anything could redeem my my past life, it is that fatal love which devours me, and of which I try to render myself worthy by the sacrifices which I make? Once more, what other than you would have understood all that? No one, no one! Not even he, who inspires this invincible passion."

And a burning tear fell upon the forehead of Taboureau — for Toinon had remained leaning on the back of his chair.

Although very ridiculous and foolish, Claude had an excellent heart. The touching accent of resignation with which Psyche spoke powerfully affected him. Without knowing what Toinon could have to ask from him, he felt his resolution already shake. Wishing to make a courageous struggle, he tried to hide the emotion of his voice by coughing several times and answered Psyche harshly. "Upon my word my sweet friend, it is not I who will pity if you have made a bad disposition of your affections."

"I do not ask pity," rejoined Psyche sorrowfully; "I love! I love! and if there is in that word abysses of sorrow—there are also treasures of happiness. It is both the life and death of my heart. I love; therefore all resignation and devotion transports and elevates me. Conceive my intoxication—I am happy enough to have a duty, a noble duty to discharge towards Tancred. I a poor, lost, despised creature—I can, on this occasion, show myself as courageously in love as a woman who is honored and respected; I can do for Tancred what a sister, a wife or a mother might do. See whether I can hesitate. For a moment I avow it—I had the selfish thought of asking your support once more. Pardon me that thought my friend; have you not already done too much for me? Then adieu, most tenderly adieu!" And she took the coarse hands of Taboureau in her own delicate ones. "If my gratitude if my unalterable friendship can pay you for all your kindness they are won for you—oh how irrevocably won!"

Psyche who had begun this speech as an actress ended by becoming really affected. She was not depraved enough to be insensible to the delicacy of Claude's devotion; and besides she

loved, loved profoundly and even as fire purifies everything, her love had almost elevated her lost character.

So when Taboureau felt his hands pressed in those of Psyche, when he saw her large eyes moist with tears, he could not overcome his weakness, he exclaimed, shaking his head and frowning with his big eyebrows to conceal a tear: "And this is just what I feared, I am worse than a goose, my heart is quite upset, I have not got the shadow of an appetite, and you will make me, I do believe, get into the carriage again to-night! Cursed sorceress that thou art!"

And the generous cicisbeo paced the room in a passion.

"No, no, my friend," continued Toinon, drying her eyes, "this is all that I expect from your friendship; you will remain here a week with Zerbinette and your valet Mascarille; if I have not returned by that time, you will give a paper which I will write to—my first master at the Hotel de Bourgogne. It is a gift of the little I possess; I owe him everything; he is not rich; I have no family; it is right that I should think of him. As for you, my friend, I intend for you that little

inlaid cabinet, which I use every day at Paris. That will be a keepsake of the poor Psyche."

"What then, have you sworn to make me mad?" asked Taboureau. "But what infernal project have you in got your head? What makes you think of making your will?"

"I am setting out this moment on foot, with a girl of the country, who consents to act as my guide to the Abbey of Pont Mont-Vert, where I hope to find M. de Florac."

"But you are mad yourself! Why not go in the chaise at any rate?"

"No postillion will leave the town; they are afraid of the heretics."

"And you don't fear them, you, with a beggar-woman for your escort?"

"I have no choice of travelling otherwise. Zerbinette is afraid, and refuses to accompany me; besides this girl is brave, she knows the country; we shall reach the Abbey to-morrow evening. There is only a night to pass on the road; besides, what harm would they do to two women?"

"And you are going across the country in velvet slippers, and a taffetas cloak, doubtless?"

"I am going to call the landlord, and to buy from him a servant's dress."

"Come, a disguise! nothing is wanting, the plot is complete! And do you now think really, that I, your friend, will ever consent to this folly, that I will let you go thus? But, unhappy woman as you are, recollect that you do not even know whether your Tancred will receive you! If you thought of committing this enormity for the most passionate, tender, and constant lover, who was expecting you on his knees and with clasped hands, as one might expect the visit of a good angel—for me, in fine, I would say to you, 'Do not go.' Much more do I now feel it my duty to tell you, to repeat to you, to cry out to you, 'Do no not go, *morbleu!* do not go,' when you are thinking of going to a man, man do I say! no, a tiger, who will perhaps repulse you," said Taboureau furiously.

"At least I shall have proved how much I love him; and one day when he compares my love to the cold and dull affection of the women whom he prefers to me, he will regret me," said Psyche, with an accent of passion impossible to describe.

"And much you will gain by his regret, obstinate, abandoned fool that you are!" cried Taboureau, pacing the room with rapid strides.

After some minutes of reflection, Claude saw that nothing in the world could keep Toinon from going; a desperate struggle took place between the natural cowardice of the cicisbeo and the profound interest with which Psyche inspired him, by the sincerity of the irresistible passion which possessed her.

At last Psyche triumphed and Taboureau said to her with a remnant of bad humour.

"May I become a goat this very moment, if, when I left Paris, I had any idea of dressing like a peasant of Languedoc."

"What do you say?" said Toinon.

"Why *tetebleu*!" said he casting a look at his laced dress, "do you think that I will accompany you in this costume shining like a glow-worm?"

"You will accompany me?"

"You will accompany me!" said Claude imitating her; "and can I—may it please you — do anything but accompany you? Can I leave you under the protection of a

beggar-woman in a country of wolves and savages?"

"Ah Claude! Claude! why cannot I love you!" cried Toinon throwing her arms round the neck of Taboureau and planting two resounding kisses on the plump cheeks of the Cicisbeo.

"To the devil!" said he gently repulsing her; "just now she froze me with horror and now she is going to set me on fire with her infernal caresses."

"Faith; I did not know sir, excuse me Mister Claude," said the malicious girl making a little country girl's curtsey, very clumsy and very simple but not the less bewitching.

"Ah cursed serpent! incarnate demon!" answered Claude shaking his fist at her, "I know thee again; it was thus that you appeared to me in the interlude of the *Medecin malgre lui.* I shall always remember it. You wore a little bodice of carnation colored velvet, with orange bows and you danced a dance of "a young girl of the village, a sweet little pest," as the playbook called you."

The church clock struck nine.

"Nine o'clock! nine already!" said Toinon.

"My friend, if you will accompany me, we must set out. But your supper?"

"O *tetebleu!* do you fancy that I have got as convenient a stomach as an ostrich? I was hungry just now, but all this has upset me and if I was at the table of Souvre or Vivonne I could not swallow a morsel. Finally, it was written that I should have no supper this evening. However I will put the quails and the cake in a basket and to-morrow, what with the morning and the fresh air, perhaps I shall make up for this dessert of fasting. Come we must now think of our costume just as if we were rehearsing at the Hotel de Bourgogne! And it is astonishing what a taste I have for play-acting."

Half an hour afterwards, Toinon, thanks to the dress of one of the maids, was completely transformed to a peasant girl of Languedoc; a red bodice, a petticoat of brown stuff, a cap of black velvet, a felt hat and a *drolet* (a sort of cloak) with a hood of fine, black cloth. Taboureau wore the dress of the worthy Thomas Rayne; a serge waistcoat, leather gaiters, goat-skin frock, a broad-brimmed hat and carried an iron-shod staff and a large knapsack containing the precious supper.

Mascarille and Zerbinette were to wait the orders of their master and mistress, and if they should have to rejoin them at Pont de Mont-Vert, they were not to leave without an escort.

At ten o'clock, Isabelle, Toinon, and Taboureau left Alais silently on a fine starry night, and directed their steps towards the west.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE JOURNEY.

After having followed for sometime the road from Alais to Pont de Mont-Vert, and crossed several fertile plains, our three travellers soon entered the defiles of the chain of the Cevennes.

As the road stretched towards the north-west it became more and more difficult. Everything, in these immense solitudes, presented the image of chaos and convulsion; great earthquakes and great volcanic erruptions had piled rocks on rocks; at intervals vast extinct craters formed so many bottomless abysses.

At midnight the moon rose clear and brilliant; but her mild and, as it were, velvet light could not soften the savage aspect of a narrow gorge which the travellers now ascended.

The rude and shattered summits of the rocks, which commanded this defile, were lost in a blueish vapour; here and there enormous fragments of calcareous spar of a glassy transparency and whiteness, hanging at a great height over the road, sparkled with a subdued light and reflected the rays of the moon like so many gigantic mirrors.

The silence of the night was profound, the echos distinctly repeated the steps of the three travellers upon this calcined soil, sonorous, and undermined with volcanic currents.

Till then Toinon had not thought it expedient to confide to Taboureau the suspicions and the terror which Isabelle had inspired her with in regard to Tancred, any more than the feigned story which had persuaded the girl to act as their guide. Psyche had also concealed from the Cicisbeo that he passed in the eyes of the fair Cevennese for a Protestant minister.

Fearing that Isabelle would break the silence which she had kept almost without interruption since they left Alais, and that Taboureau would make an awkward answer, Toinon informed Claude in a few words of what had passed between her and Isabelle.

In his simplicity Claude very much approved

of Toinon's idea of passing him off for a Protestant minister. In his opinion the only misfortune to be apprehended was meeting a band of heretics; and he now considered himself as clothed with a character inviolable in the eyes of Protestants.

Despite this protection, Taboureau was far from being completely re-assured. The aspect of these deserts, rendered still more imposing by the semi-obscurity which covered them, made a painful impression upon him; sometimes the fantastic appearance of the rocks, strangely shadowed by the moonlight, filled him with suppressed terror, sometimes those vague, distant noises, which the mysterious voices of great solitudes seem to send forth to one another during the calm of the night, redoubled the fears of the Cicisbeo.

Toinon, elevated by her love, by the feverish ardour which gives so much courage to frail and easily excited natures, Toinon feared nothing. She was rapt in the pleasure of surprising Tancred, of braving fatigues and perils for his sake, she indulged in a thousand golden dreams: he would receive her kindly, for in this wild country, she would have no rival to fear; in order to follow him more conveniently

she would wear men's clothes, and act as his page, his valet, at least she would be near him. The only fear, which sometimes chilled the heart of poor Toinon, was the thought that Tancred might receive her ill, and even drive her away; but Psyche soon turned her glance away from this black gulph of despair, not to daunt her courage by forebodings of evil.

Psyche and her cicisbeo had slackened their pace a little, in order to converse together at freedom; Isabelle preceded them.

The gloomy silence, which the fair Cevennese obstinately maintained, may easily be understood; after three years of absence she was about to see once more John Cavalier. Without knowing that he was one of the rebel chiefs, she felt sure that he had taken an active part in the insurrection. Isabelle intended to go to St. Andéol, hoping to find Cavalier there. If he was not there, she intended to seek him; she had terrible secrets to reveal to him; she had to explain to him a conduct, whose fatal appearances were against her. Isabelle knew in fine that the Marquis of Florac, against whom she bore an implacable hatred, commanded the royal troops opposed to the fanatics. So many subjects of thought

were sufficient to absorb the fair Cevennese, to render her regardless of her fellow travellers and an easy dupe of the imposition which had transformed Toinon to a protestant, and Taboureau to a minister.

Without doubt, the prolongation of the journey would render the assumed parts of Psyche and her cicisbeo much more difficult to sustain than they had hitherto been.

An incident brought the three travellers together, and engaged them in conversation.

A mass of rock, doubtless long undermined by the hand of time, detached itself from the crest of one of the two mountains which overhung the road, rolled down its slope with the noise of thunder, and burst into shatters in the middle of the road.

At this tremendous sound, repeated by the echoes of the Cevennes, Toinon and Taboureau turned pale.

"We are lost!" cried Taboureau.

Isabelle stopped a moment, made a sign to her companions not to stir, and listened, laying her ear to the ground.

After listening for some moments, the fair Cevennese rose and said to Taboureau:

"It is a land-slip, common enough in our mountains, reverent Pastor, let us go on."

The Cicisbeo, stunned with fright, had forgotten his part; so, hearing himself called "reverent pastor," he looked at Isabelle with astonishment.

"Recollect that you pass for a minister," said Psyche to him in a low voice as she began to walk forward.

"Ah!" said Claude, striking his forehead.

After walking for some minutes, Isabelle, employing the scriptural allegories and the figurative language familiar to the Protestants, said to the Cicisbeo in a grave and sad voice.

"The prophets have commanded all those who dwell towards Esdrelon, to seize the mountains, by which men go up to Jerusalem, and the children of Israel have executed this order."

Claude Taboureau, completely ignorant of sacred geography, did not catch the possible connection, between Israel, Esdrelon, Jerusalem, the prophets, and actual circumstances; he cast an embarrassed look at Isabelle, and answered at hap-hazard, with a tone of approbation.

"And they have done well, faith, my dear Mademoiselle, to obey the prophets."

"And your arrival, Reverent Pastor, will fill their hearts with gladness. The vine is ripe. Your voice will sustain them in the vintage."

"Ah!" said Claude, in a low voice to Toinon, "what does she mean with her vine and her vintage? Does she take me now for the chorister of a Cathedral?" However he replied with much unction: "I will do my very best to please our brethren during the vintage. As for my voice, my dear young lady, it is only a very humble bass; but, however, as they say the best inn can only give what is in it, ha! ha!" added Taboureau, laughing gaily to enliven the conversation which seemed to him a great deal too much in unison with the melancholy aspect of the spot in which they were.

Toinon pinched him to make him hold his tongue, fearing that the fair Cevennese would be shocked with this strange language, but Isabelle had heard nothing.

All at once she stopped before a rude tomb raised in a cleft of the rock.

"It was here that the Minister Candomergue was massacred," said Isabelle, with a gloomy voice.

"Ah! ah! the Minister Candomergue was massacred in the midst of these rocks?" said Claude, with a certain degree of emotion.

"Massacred in the midst of his brethren, to whom he was giving the word of God as you are going to give it to our brethren, Reverent Pastor! Ah, the courage of warriors armed with the sword is nothing to yours, pious teachers of the Gospel! The ardour of battle carries the soldier away; while you, unmoved in the midst of carnage, you have only songs of joy to raise to the Lord, you have only your precious blood to offer to him as an holocaust!"

Taboureau approached Toinon, looking at Isabelle with much dislike; he began to regret very much having taken upon himself so heedlessly the part of a minister, when he saw to what dangers he might find himself exposed. So he said in a low voice to Psyche:

"Decidedly, I had rather pass for a simple Protestant; that is not perhaps as brilliant as a minister; but it seems to me infinitely safer."

"Impossible!" said Toinon, "you will ruin everything. But what does all this matter? To-morrow evening we shall have reached Pont de Mont-Vert."

Then, wishing doubtless to encourage Claude, she said to Isabelle:

"But the number of ministers whom we have had to regret lately is happily not considerable?"

"Not considerable!" said Isabelle, with a bitter smile. "No, doubtless, because the executioner has wanted victims; because the greater number of our ministers have already perished in the flames or on the wheel. If the Moabites massacre no more ministers, it is because none remain to be massacred; you know it but too well, worthy Minister, you the last perhaps of those proscribed saints who come heroically to devote themselves to martyrdom. But what matters martyrdom? Its palms are green and immortal!" said Isabelle, with enthusiasm.

The Cicisbeo felt himself more and more ill at ease through the terrific colours in which Isabelle had just painted the pious mission which he was supposed to perform. He approached Psyche and said to her: "Between ourselves I hate that girl with her masculine air; there is something sinister in her countenance. Ahem! she seems to me a singular person with her green palms and her martyr-

dom! Ah, Psyche! Psyche," added he with a look of chagrin, "all this will end ill. May the devil fly away with the Marquis of Florac with all the Marquisses in the world."

"Doubtless the palms of martyrdom are glorious," said Toinon to extricate Taboureau from his embarrassment, "but our worthy conductress will permit the sister of this holy minister to desire ardently that her brother may live a long time to set forth the word of God."

"Doubtless, doubtless," said Taboureau, "I am very desirous to set forth the Word of God as long as I possibly can. It is because ministers are rare, very rare, that those who remain ought to be taken the most precious care of," continued he in an oracular tone. "I have my reasons for speaking thus; I am no longer my own property." Then he added, "But tell me, my dear young lady, there is no chance that we should meet any one between here and Pont de Mont-Vert is there?"

"It is not likely unless the brethren have attacked the Moabites. They say that they are in the plain; so that they may spread themselves in this direction to occupy these mountains."

"Happily with you we have nothing to fear," said Toinon to Isabelle.

"Fear! and what should you have to fear? It is with blessings, with shouts of gladness, I said before to you, that the brethren will receive us, for this pious minister is with us. And the sons of Israel will not have voices enough to implore a sermon from him, to supplicate him to let them immediately hear the word of the Lord."

"You see to what you expose me with your accursed freak," said Claude in a low voice to Toinon with a look of despair. "I may be at any moment called on to speak the word of the Lord to these wretches and to sing mass for them. What the devil would you have me say to them?" And he rejoined hurriedly at the risk of ruining everything. "But happily my dear young lady, the royal troops are pressing the rebels hard, and we are just as likely to meet a detachment of brave dragoons as a band of Protestants."

Isabelle looked at Toinon with the greatest surprise.

"My brother, what are you saying," cried Toinon, alarmed at the turn which the conversation was taking.

Happily, Isabelle, whose thoughts were en-

grossed by her expected interview with Cavalier, did not bring the greatest attention to the conversation. In the question of Taboureau, she saw a sort of impatience for martyrdom, which seemed to her very heroic, so she answered the cicisbeo respectfully:

"Holy pastor, I see you are more eager to meet our butchers than our brethren. Daniel also was eager to be cast into the lion's den, Azarias to be cast into the furnace, for the praises of the Lord are sung most gloriously in the midst of tortures."

"Tortures!" cried Claude, "will you have done at last and leave me alone with your tortures? Are you mad? Do you really think that if a party of dragoons were to come, I should not tell them?"

"And what would it matter?" Toinon made haste to say, interrupting Taboureau. "There is nothing to prove that we are Protestants. We should say as we have done upon the road that we are Catholics."

Isabelle stopped abruptly, cast a look of lightning upon Psyche, and turning towards Taboureau, she said to him with an accent of gloomy and disdainful compassion:

"Have pity on this child, for she is weak;

pity her, for the fatigue of the journey, the sorrow of knowing her relations to be prisoners, have disturbed her reason. She proposes to you a perjury, reverend pastor; she does not understand, in her bewilderment, that if you have, in order to rejoin the brethren, put on the gilded garments of the sons of Baal; when you once have reached the sacred theatre of this holy war, you will trample the false gods beneath your feet. Say that we are Catholics!" exclaimed Isabelle, with increasing indignation. "When Jael had put Sisera to sleep, when Judith had deceived Holofernes, did they not become once more the daughters of the Lord, to bid the hour of his vengeance strike?" and the anger of Isabelle redoubled. "If we should meet the King's troops, oh! it would be with a voice loud as the trumpet of Sinai, that your brother and that I would tell the Moabites 'Glory to the Lord of Hosts! we are Protestants!' And thou, even thou, poor child, wouldst join thy weak voice to ours, when thou sawest that we purchased a happy eternity by a resigned and courageous death!"

From all this, Claude encountered the following dilemma; if he fell in with a party

of Protestants, he must be detected as a false minister by his inability to preach; if he fell in with a party of Catholics, his disguise and the wild exultation of Isabelle would make him pass for a Protestant minister, in spite of his own denials.

He wavered between these two alternatives, both equally formidable, when Toinon, who for some moments had been anxiously listening, said all at once:

"Listen, listen; I hear a great sound of voices."

CHAPTER XX.

THE CONVENTICLE.

At the moment that these sounds were heard the three travellers were in a mountain gorge, so dark, so shut in, so overhung that they hardly perceived the first faint twilight of the dawn which had already begun to break.

At the end of this defile, a sort of natural gallery, terminated by two sheer walls of rock, crowned with a roof of verdure formed by the chesnut-trees which grew upon their summits, were seen the waning stars and the dawn which now commenced to whiten the horizon.

After having listened attentively to the distant noise which still continued, Isabelle cried out:

"It is the voice of Israel! it is our brethren. They are singing the psalm of deliverance."

"We are lost!" said Taboureau to Toinon, in a low and trembling voice. "Certainly I do not reproach you with my death, my dear friend, but you are the maddest little fool that ever lived."

"Let us go on, let us go on, Reverent Pastor," continued Isabelle, "the brethern are doubtless assembled on the Rhan-Jastrie. This defile will take us there."

Toinon and Taboureau hesitated to quicken their steps, when a rough voice, which appeared to proceed from one of the excavations of this hollow road, cried:

"Who goes there?"

At the same instant, a figure of which nothing but the dark outline could be distinguished, for the obscurity was still so great, appeared abruptly before Isabelle. This man brandished a scythe whose blade, fastened to a long pole, gleamed in the dim twilight.

The voice again asked:

"Who goes there?"

"Two daughters of Israel who rejoin their brethern and a holy Pastor," said Isabelle.

"The Lord be with you!" said the man shouldering his scythe once more. "The brethren are assembled in arms on the Rhan-

Jastrie; the word of a Minister of God will be sweet to them."

Then the Protestant insurgent raised a hoarse cry followed by this word: *Ezriel!**

The cry and the word were repeated by two other sentinels, doubtless also stationed along the hollow way, and charged, like the scythe-bearer, to give, by watch-words, signals of alarm or encouragement to the Religionists.

Toinon and Taboureau had no other part to take than to follow Isabelle, and resigned themselves accordingly.

The Cicisbeo was dying with fright; Psyche, insensible to the dangers which she might encounter, thought with despair that it might be long before she would see Tancred again.

The day was breaking rapidly.

When the three travellers had arrived at the end of the hollow way, the first rays of the rising sun had begun to tinge the horizon.

The spectacle then offered to the eyes of Toinon and Taboureau was of a majesty at once so grand and so desolate, so wild and so terrible that both stopped short in astonishment.

The defile which they had just left led to

* Ezriel signifies in Hebrew—The Help of the Lord.

one of the higher platforms of the Rhan-Jastrie, one of the extinct volcanos of the chain of the Cevennes.

As far as the eye could reach, nothing was seen but a grey soil, heaped with masses of basalt of volcanic formation, and with fragments of hard and blackish *schorl* whose sharp points bristled the ground.

Pale lichens of a rust colour, the only vegetation of this desert, spread, leprous-like, over enormous blocks of brown granite, upheaved no doubt to the midst of this dread chaos by some subterranean convulsion. Torrents of porous and reddish lava, which had grown cold ages ago, furrowed this vast platform in every direction and lost themselves in petrified cascades over the steeps of the lower slopes. A staircase worthy of the Titans! Each of its steps was three hundred feet high, and its base was lost in the damp mist of the morning.

The day's first fires, notwithstanding their splendour, could not cast the least ray upon this scene of death and desolation; they only served to augment the horror of this solitude, by displaying at every step the ravages of the burning furnace which had formerly calcined the surface and torn the bowels of the earth.

To the north the frightful peaks of this flame-scathed mountain chain were lost in the depth of the horizon; to the south the extinct crater of the volcano, yawning and black as soot, opened its bottomless abysses; to the east rose the upper cone of Rhan-Jastrie, a stern greyish and calcareous mountain, marked with several strata of a slaty *schistus* which give it a forbidding and melancholy appearance. The sun rose behind that Peak which cast its giant shadow over the platform; finally, between two rocks, surmounted with a wood of chesnut trees, was seen the issue of that dark defile in the opening of which Toinon and Taboureau were still standing.

A great number of Religionists kneeling in prayer covered this vast natural esplanade; nearly all belonged to the class of mountaineers and woodcutters. Some were dressed in those frocks of coarse white material from which their name of *Camisards* was afterwards derived, others were dressed in the skins of beasts. Altho' they were on their knees, they had not quitted their arms; some carried muskets but the greater number were armed with scythes, pikes, axes and hoes, on which they leant and of which the newly sharpened iron glittered

in the rising light. Since the sentinels had cried out "Ezriel!' the singing of the Religionists had ceased; the most profound silence reigned in this solitude. The rebels, gathered together in a semi-cirle, appeared to examine the new comers with a stern attention.

The sombre and silent gaze of this mass of men had something frightful in it.

Psyche turned pale. Taboureau could not make a step.

Isabelle was about to advance to her brethren, when these, doubtless shocked by the irreverence of the strangers, who remained standing, began to murmur hoarsely, and cried at length with a terrible concert:

"Kneel, kneel!"

Isabelle and her two companions knelt accordingly: the interrupted psalm was continued, and ended with the following verse:

"Nations shall tremble when they see
Thee, Lord! descend in Majesty;
The pride of every King shall fear
The lightning of thy lifted spear.

The wild and powerful harmony of the voices of these men, this terrific and earthquake-riven

wilderness all gave to this scene a majestic and appalling character.

After the psalm, all the Cevennese rose. Some formed themselves into animated groups; some stretched themselves to sleep in the shade; others, seated on the ground, began to sharpen the point or the edge of their arms upon some block of granite. Ephraim, the chief this assemblage, leant against a rock; by his side was seen a boy of about fifteen years of age, thin, sunburnt, with wild and bristling hair, with a restless and bewildered eye, and a dark and sinister countenance nearly always contracted by the painful convulsion of a nervous disorder. He walked barefooted, and wore a long ragged robe of red stuff, secured round his loins by a cord of reeds.

This boy, one of Du Serre's little prophets, had been named *Ichabod* by Ephraim. Among all the victims of the glass-maker's fatal experiments, perhaps none had yielded him more complete and horrible success. In a state of almost unintermittent hallucination, haggard, almost in a state of frenzy, Ichabod, already doubtless of a vicious disposition, burst out in prophecies of massacre, in merciless inspirations. His imagination, distracted by his fero-

cious monomania; presented to him nothing but images of blood and carnage; and his shrill, shrieking voice cited on every occasion the most sanguinary passages from Scripture.

Ephraim, believing him possessed with the Spirit of the Lord, held for his advice and his commands, a respect the more religious because they were always worthy of the ferocity of the former forest-keeper of Aygoal.

When the prayers were over, Isabelle, followed by Toinon and Taboureau, had resolutely approached Ephraim, whom she knew.

"What do I see," said the latter recoiling with a movement of disgust, "the daughter of Dominick Astier, she who broke her faith to our brother Cavalier, she who allowed herself to be seduced by the gilded flatteries of one of these Moabites!"

"You have a right to accuse me, Ephraim," answered the undaunted Isabelle; "the hour of my justification is not yet come. Where is Cavalier?"

"Desire not his coming! it will be fatal tc thee! Wretched woman, depart from among us! Depart with thy shame! The harlots of

Tyre and Sidon have been driven from among the daughters of Israel!" cried Ephraim.

Ichabod, doubtless fatigued, had laid down at the foot of a rock, and was half asleep, casting from time to time upon the strangers, and especially upon Taboureau, a restless and ferocious look.

Many of the rebels had approached the group on hearing Ephraim speak in a loud voice; their dark faces, lit up with a wild enthusiasm, bore an expression of menace.

The Psyche and her Cicisbeo, seeing with terror the bad reception of their companion, kept themselves timidly behind her.

Isabelle, doubtless strong in her innocence, answered Ephraim proudly: "The just will not await their last judgment with more confidence, than I await the moment of appearing before John Cavalier."

"Woe unto thee if thou blasphemest!" said Ephraim with a stern and incredulous look. Then he added, pointing to Toinon and Taboureau: "Who are these people?"

"This," said Isabelle, "is a minister of our holy religion; his mother is a prisoner at Pont de Mont-Vert."

"And my brother and I are going to join

her and share her fate, Seignor Captain," said Toinon, dropping her most seducing curtsey to the savage Ephraim.

But the Keeper of Aygoal answered this coquetry with a smile of contempt, and said harshly: "It is the Moabites who call one another Seignors and Captains; in the camp of the Everlasting, we know not these vanities, we are all brethren." Then, softening the asperity of his voice, and addressing himself to Taboureau, he said: "The Lord be with you, holy Pastor! Alas! it is long since we were deprived of the word of the Lord!"

Since the commencement of this scene, the fears of Taboureau had continually increased; when he saw Ephraim, whose appearance was so terrible, fix upon him a keen and penetrating look, he lost his head, forgot his part, and foreseeing that he would run greater risk by profaning the sacred character with which he was supposed to be invested, he exclaimed, clasping his hands and falling on his knees: "Mercy, mercy, my good and worthy sir! I am not what you think!"

"What art thou, then?" said Ephraim, knocking off with the back of his hand, the

slouched hat of the Cicisbeo, to get a better sight of his features.

"Forgive me for not discovering myself, my dear sir, but the excitement, the sight of these gentlemen, your respectable friends—"

"Who art thou? who art thou?" demanded Ephraim, in a voice of thunder, whilst the circle of the rebels closed in around him.

"Claude—Jerome—Boniface Taboureau, a burgess of Paris, the most humble, the most devoted of your servants, and who has enough, thank heaven! to pay you a good ransom if you require one."

"Are you of our religion?" said the Keeper of Aygoal.

"No, I am a Catholic, my worthy gentlemen; I love to be frank."

"A Catholic!" cried the Religionists.

"But I do not care the least in the world for that distinction; and I will become a Protestant on the spot if that would be the least pleasure to you, my brave gentlemen; I will even become a Turk, if you please, and that from the very bottom of my heart," Claude hastened to add, thinking thereby to conciliate the Religionists.

But the latter, considering this vocation somewhat too sudden, raised murmurs of indignation; some even pronounced the ominous word of "spy!"

Isabelle, astounded, regarded Psyche with a look in which there was as much surprise as indignation. Taking her by the hand, and towering over her with the full height of her lofty stature, she exclaimed, "Then you have told me a lie?"

"A lie? yes!" answered Psyche resolutely, feeling all her hate to Isabelle revive, and casting round her, upon the rebels who environed her, glances of indignation, for they were the mortal enemies of Tancred; "yes then I told you a lie. I wished to go to Pont de Mont-Vert, I could not find a guide, and in order to persuade you to be my guide I told you that lie." Then addressing the rebels Psyche added firmly, "Now then do with us what you please."

"And what did you want at Pont de Mont-Vert, at that new Babylon?" exclaimed Ephraim.

"You shall never know," said Psyche boldly, casting a significant glance at Taboureau, who, doubtless seeing the little good

which he had gained by his frankness, repeated as he rose;

"It is unfortunately impossible for Psyche and me to have the honor of telling you what we wanted at Pont de Mont-Vert, my dear gentlemen. But if a ransom of two thousand, if four thousand louis could be agreeable to you it would be a pleasure to me to offer it—my signature is as good—as good—and—"

After having reflected a moment Ephraim made a sign, and two of the rebels approached. "Take (he said) this Philistine and his companion to the Black Well; the Spirit of the Lord shall decide their fate."

Resistance was impossible; Toinon and Taboureau were led behind an enormous fragment of rock, near an extinct crater, a dark abyss whose depth was unfathomable to mortal eye.

"Ah Psyche! Psyche!" said poor Claude, "it is not to reproach you for your foolish freak, but you have put us into a horrible position. They called me a Philistine, when I talked to them of ransom they would not listen to me. We are near an abominable hole of which one cannot see the bottom; they say that the Spirit

of the Lord shall decide our fate. What does all this mean?"

"O Tancred! Tancred!" cried Toinon in an ecstasy of despair.

At this instant the sentinels raised a new cry of encouragement followed by these words. "Brother Cavalier and his troop!"

CHAPTER XXI.

THE MEETING OF ISABELLE AND CAVALIER.

When Isabelle heard the name of Cavalier pronounced, her heart sank within her, she leant upon a rock, whose angle half concealed her, and contemplated the young Cevennese chief, with an expression of profound sadness.

He had come, followed by his party, by one of the numerous defiles which led from the lower ranges, to the vast platform of the Rhanjastrie.

The appearance of Cavalier and of the greater part of the Religionists who composed his troop, offered a striking contrast with that of Ephraim and his band.

The former were dressed more like townspeople than like peasants or like mountaineers;

nearly all had military arms in very good order —they appeared accustomed to the use of them —sashes of different colours relieved the sombre hue of their dress. Some even affected a military bearing; they wore plumes or shoulder knots; in general this band of insur-surgents belonged to the class of artizans or small shopkeeps.

Agile, robust, and presenting by their appearance, the idea of an urban militia, they appeared animated by an enthusiasm as ardent, but less wild, than that which inflamed the fierce mountaineers of Ephraim.

Cavalier, dressed with a sort of military elegance, wore a buff doublet, a felt hat with black plumes, a scarf of the same colour, being a sign of mourning for his mother, doe skin hose, and high boots of Cordova leather, with gilt spurs; he had left his horse at the foot of the Rhan-jastrie, his belt sustained a sword and dagger somewhat richly ornamented. His bold and lively features, animated as they were by a rapid march, expressed the pride of command. He walked with a proud step. His imperious, almost haughty bearing, distinguished him from those who accompanied him.

On his left he had Celeste, on his right Gabriel, both dressed in white, his brother and sister acted as the Prophets of his troop, as Ichabod acted as prophet to that of Ephraim.

Such was the difference which existed between the troops of the *Camisards*, to make use of the term by which the rebels were already designated.

Though they were destined to act against a common enemy, it will be easy to guess that the motive of action of these two forces would be very different.

Cavalier with his militia of workingmen and townspeople would carry on a more regular and a more humane war than Ephraim. The wild mountaineers of the Forester, armed with scythes, knives, and axes, would serve as guerillas, and display a merciless ferocity.

Finally, though there was no misunderstanding between the forces, it was easy to remark that the more studied equipments of the troops of Cavalier excited the stern contempt of Ephraim and his mountaineers, nearly all dressed like him in the skins of beasts.

"The Lord be with thee, brother Ephraim!" said Cavalier to the Keeper of Aygoal, while his troop stayed apart at a little distance.

"The Lord keep thee from all temptation, brother Cavalier!" said Ephraim, casting a look of disdainful pity on the dress of the young Cevennese, "thou hast come betimes to the place of assemblage. Are those our brethren from the parishes in the plain?"

"All. And are those our brethren of the mountains?"

"All. The camp of the Everlasting is now set up; the vine will soon send forth cries of lamentation, for the Lord of hosts hath said that he will pass through it like a whirlwind."

"Is our scout come back from Pont de Mont-Vert? Does he know if the reinforcement of soldiers has appeared in the East? For it is most important, brother, to prevent the junction of these troops with those commanded by the Marquis of Florac."

"The scout has not come back as yet from Pont de Mont-Vert, and since yesterday, we have had no news from the East, but we must soon receive them," said Ephraim.

Suddenly Cavalier turned red and pale in quick succession, his eyes flashed with anger, he could not utter a word: he had just perceived Isabelle advancing to him.

By an involuntary movement he carried his

hand to his dagger, half drew it from the sheath, then, rapidly returning it, cried out with as much astonishment as rage:

"Ephraim! Ephraim! who would have thought that this wretched creature would have dared to show herself among the brethren?"

"She says she is not guilty; as the golden pillars are upon sockets of silver, so are the fair feet with a constant heart.* Prove her; the furnace tries the vessel of the potter, so doth affliction try the just," said Ephraim, and he went away, shrugging his shoulders with an air of contempt as if such matters were unworthy his intervention. Isabelle had approached Cavalier with slow steps, with timidity but not with shame. Her attitude was that of sorrow, not repentance.

"Away, away! wretched woman!" exclaimed Cavalier, stamping with his foot. "I had forgotten thy infamy, but the sight of thee revives my indignation! Go; once more, depart! or I will expose thee without pity before the brethren."

"What I have to say to you, I will say before them. I do not ask your pity but justice,

* Ecclesiasticus (Apocr.) chap. 26, v. 18.

only justice!" said Isabelle, with a calm and mournful dignity.

"The justice which you merit is my hate, my scorn. Once more, away!"

"Justice, only justice!" repeated Isabelle, joining her hands in supplication, and approaching Cavalier.

"Ah! thou forcest me to do it," and raising his voice, he called out loud enough to be heard by a good number of Camisards who had drawn nearer by degrees, "Brethren! you see this girl? She is handsome, her air is proud and noble, is it not? Her forehead and her look command respect. She is of our religion, her father was an old soldier who fought bravely under the great Duke of Rohan."

"My father is dead!" said Isabelle with a deep sigh.

"You hear her!" said Cavalier, "her father is dead, dead, without doubt, of shame and despair, for you do not know all the execrable blackness, all the depravity of soul which is hidden beneath this form. You do not know that it is three years since her father and mine betrothed us. Then I loved this girl, oh! I loved her passionately because I believed her the most noble and the most virtuous of our

sisters. One day at Anduze I was walking with her and her father; on account of her I was insulted by a Papist, by the officer who now commands the king's troops at Pont de Mont-Vert, by the Marquis of Florac! I was insulted, infamously insulted; what could I do? I was a working-man, a heretic, a thing to be outraged and then to be sent to the galleys or the gibbet. But I, working-man and heretic as I was, since this man had struck me in the face, I sought to kill him; I seized the sword of the father of this unhappy woman, the soldiers of the Marquis fell upon me, my companions rescued me, I fled and lived an exile at Geneva. Well, whilst her betrothed was proscribed, what is the infamous conduct of this girl? Do you know it," said Cavalier, interrupting himself and casting a look of withering scorn upon Isabelle.

She had listened with a profound and increasing sorrow for the Cevennese present at this strange scene seemed by their murmurs also to accuse her.

Feeling her indignant conscience revolt within her, Isabelle, strong in her innocence, interrupted in her turn Cavalier, and with glowing cheeks, with flashing eyes, with an im-

perious gesture, and a haughty tone, at the instant that the Camisard repeated these words, "Do you know what was her conduct?" she exclaimed;

"Her conduct? I myself will tell you. God hears me. God sees me; He knows if I have ever lied. When John Cavalier was forced to fly to Geneva, I prevailed upon my father, by earnest prayers, to go to rejoin my betrothed in Switzerland. We set out one night; but the man who had insulted Cavalier no doubt had set his soldiers to spy upon us. At two leagues distance from Anduze we were arrested. The brethren know to what punishment fugitives who are arrested are condemned; the men go to the galleys, and the women to prison. I was in despair for having persuaded my father to this flight; not on my own account but on his. He was so old, he suffered so much from his wounds; then for a soldier, the galleys! Oh that was horrible! Then this man who had insulted my betrothed came to see us in our house where he kept us prisoners. From thence we were to be conducted to Nismes; I thought that he came to triumph over our misfortunes. According to appearances it was otherwise. He pitied us; he even laid the

blame of our arrest upon the blind zeal of his soldiers; he accused himself of having forgotten his station, of having acted dishonorably by insulting Cavalier who could not revenge himself. In spite of the regret which he expressed, I avowed to this man all the disdain which I felt for him; I said to him that his wickedness alone had caused all our calamities and I demanded from him the liberty of my father by way of expiation. He owed it to me, he could not suffer this old man to be dragged to the galleys. The first day he gave me no answer; the next day he came again; I was alone. 'You,' he said, 'can prevent your father being sent to the galleys.' What must I do? 'Permit me to come to see you every day.' But I hate you, but I despise you; but my betrothed is an exile through your means, my father is a prisoner, and we are exposed to an infamous punishment,' I answered. 'You may hate me, you may despise me; only let me come to see you every day and your father is saved.' I call Heaven to witness that these were his words," said Isabelle, raising her hand solemnly.

Cavalier made a gesture of gloomy incredulity. Isabelle continued: "What that man asked

from me was odious, his very sight was an affliction to me; in vain I supplicated him, he was inexorable, then I consented to endure his visits. I sacrificed my repugnance, my aversion, to the safety of my father, from whom I concealed nothing. For some days, he came thus. He was noble, he was young, he was rich, he did everything to overcome the disgust with which he inspired me, just as if he had never known that I loved!"

And Isabelle cast upon Cavalier a look full of affection and dignity. "This man," she added; "redoubled also his attentions to my father, who was always cold and disdainful to him. Well, all this was but a calculation of horrible hypocrisy. This man wanted to make me his victim, and also doubtless to make me pass for his accomplice."

At these words the voice of Isabelle changed and she continued rapidly as if every word burnt her lips.

"Once he came, as he usually did, in the evening; he informed us that he was leaving on the next day with his troops; he took his leave of us. At the moment that he quitted us, he hid himself in a dark room. He had gained a woman who waited on us—I learnt

it afterwards. I know not what drug they put into my beverage, but I fell into a sleep like death. The next morning I awoke dishonored."

The Cevennese, who had heard her, raised one universal cry of indignation. The voice, the expression of countenance of Isabelle bore too deeply the impress of truth, to admit a moment's doubt of what she asserted.

Cavalier rushed to her, his eyes flashing with rage, his features convulsed by a thousand different emotions. Taking both her hands in his, he exclaimed, "Thou sayest the truth, dost thou not, the truth?"

"God hears me," said Isabelle, raising her eyes to heaven.

"Proceed, proceed, poor woman," said Cavalier in a broken voice, "I believe thee."

"When I awoke that wretch was by my side! Lost and distracted I called my father; he came armed, a combat took place. But my father was weak and old; his sword was broken. His life was spared!" cried Isabelle, with indescribable bitterness; "his life was spared! and the old man was left conquered with his dishonored child. The villain had departed. Some months afterwards my father and I also left the country to escape our

shame," added Isabelle, hiding her face with both her hands.

"And thy father, thy father?" cried Cavalier.

"He died of despair. When he was dead I sought to see thee again, John Cavalier, to tell you all, to defend myself against the calumnies which had not spared me, for appearances were against me. On my road I learnt that our insurgent brethren occupied these mountains. God has guided me to you, to justify myself, and I do not know whether my end is attained."

"Oh I believe thee! I believe thee! but we will be avenged!" said Cavalier, supporting Isabelle, who, overcome by so great a shock, fainted.

CHAPTER XXII.

THE SCOUT.

THE Camisards had listened with a gloomy indignation to the story of Isabelle. Their rage, so long restrained, broke forth in execrations.

Suddenly the word *Ezriel* was repeated several times by the sentinels.

A man dressed in a tattered white frock, and shod with hempen sandals, covered with dust, arrived precipitately, and after having asked where Ephriam and Cavalier were, advanced to the first of these chiefs.

"What news?" said Ephraim.

"The Miquelets have separated from the dragoons," said the scout who came from Pont de Mont-Vert. "The Arch-Priest remained at the Abbey with the prisoners and Captain

Paul, whilst the Marquis of Florac has marched with his troops to meet the forces which they say are coming from Nismes."

"Praise the Lord!" exclaimed Ephraim; "the Moabites are separating themselves from the Philistines; one post shall run to meet another, and one messenger to meet another, to show the King of Babylon that his city is taken."*

Cavalier, still stupified by the fatal revelation of Isabelle, agitated by turns with rage, sorrow, and pity, fixed his eyes upon the unhappy girl, sometimes with excruciating anguish, sometimes with wild astonishment, whilst bursting into long suppressed sobs, she sat down at the foot of a rock, and bathed her hands with tears.

All at once the voice of Ephraim recalled Cavalier to himself.

Tha Keeper of Aygoal was conversing with Esprit Seguier, a woodcutter as ferocious as himself, and whom, no doubt, upon that account, he had distinguished from the rest of his followers.

When Cavalier approached Ephraim, slowly

* Jeremiah, chap. 51, v. 31.

turning round from time to time, in order to cast a despairing glance at Isabelle, Esprit Seguier retired discreetly, and the two chiefs remained alone.

"The scout has come in, the Arch-Priest remains at the Abbey with the Miquelets, and the Marquis of Florac goes to meet the troops which are coming from Nismes," said Ephraim.

"The Marquis for me! the Arch-Priest for thee!" cried Cavalier, with triumphant rage. "The Lord hath delivered him into my hands!" Then he added, "where is the scout?"

Ephraim turned his head, made a sign, and the mountaineer approached.

"Have you really seen the dragoons leave the Abbey, and take the road to Nismes?"

"Yes, brother Cavalier, I saw them with their drums, their hautboys, and their captain at their head."

"At what o'clock?"

"This morning at sun-rise; I met them at a league's distance from St. Maurice de Ventalou."

"By the sword of God! if we are on the hill of St. Andre d'Ancise before the dragoons,

not one of them will escape," cried Cavalier, after some minutes' silence, for he knew better than any man the topography of the Cevennes. Long before the commencement of the revolt, he had studied with care and reflection the configuration of the country. "Not a dragoon will escape," he added, "they must pass through that defile to get into the open country. And women or children in ambush there would suffice to destroy a whole army."

Ephraim remained some minutes in thought, and said with a gloomy air:

"My vision is about to be fulfilled. 'Thus shall perish the ravening wolves,' it said. Perhaps this very night the Arch-Priest of Baal, that wolf ravening the prey for souls, may be hung upon the cross by the high-road after his blood hath smoked upon the heather."

"No quarter!" cried Cavalier, "for it is the savage Miquelets who guard the Abbey."

Ephraim replied by this citation from Scripture:

"'The Lord shall bring a nation against thee from far, from the end of the earth, as swift as the eagle flieth, a nation whose tongue

thou shalt not understand, a nation of fierce countenance which shall not regard the person of the old, nor show favour to the young.'"

Then the forester added with an air of ferocious disdain:

"But the wolves also are fierce, but their howlings also are menacing, but they also are merciless, and yet my musket or my knife have many a time rid the flocks of these enemies!"

"Perhaps," said Cavalier, with hesitation, "we ought to unite our forces to attack the Abbey, or the dragoons?—The enemy is divided—let us unite to crush him—Come with me to the hill of St. André, brother Ephraim, and when the dragoons are exterminated we will come back upon the Abbey."

"And if the dragoons have outstripped us? and if we do not find them at the hill of Saint André? and if they join the reinforcements from Nismes? Cannot they return before us to Pont de Mont-Vert? And if they do so, the moment of delivering our brethren, of delivering thy father is past."

"My father! my father! thou art right, Ephraim! leave to me the expedition to the Abbey. My hate blinds me in fact: is it not for me to go to deliver my father? Thou

wilt go to exterminate the dragoons and to kill Florac; and yet, no—no—thou must not kill him; *he belongs to me.* Thou hast heard Isabelle, therefore, Ephraim, command thy people to spare him, for I must have this man, thou understandest, I must have him."

"The vision which the Lord sent unto me must before all things be fulfilled. It said unto me that the Arch-Priest should perish by the sword of the Lord. He must perish! The Arch-Priest is mine," said Ephraim, with a grim smile.

"Thou wishest it?"

"I wish it."

"Be it so—Let us march—It is time—the sun is already above the top of Rhan-Jastrie."

At this moment a new cry of encouragement was raised by the sentinels, an inhabitant of the Plain appeared. His look was pale and disordered, he carried a musket and a bag full of provisions.

"Ah brother, brother Cavalier," he cried, "there is no pity or mercy for us. In the plain we are murdered, our houses are rased, and our standing crops are set on fire."

"What dost thou mean?"

"Yesterday, Paul, the infernal Paul, left

the Abbey at the head of a detachment of his savage Miquelets. Ten of his people entered the farm-house of Wellbeloved Frugeires* and demanded his money. Frugeires answered that he had none. Then they tied Frugeires and his wife upon a bench, and they put lighted gun-matches between their thumbs to force them to tell where their money was hid."

"The wretches!" cried Cavalier.

"As Wellbeloved Frugeires and his wife had no money, and they persisted in saying so, the Miquelets got enraged and massacred them both with their sabres. Two old people—so good—so respected in the country!"

"And thou didst see this?" said Ephraim.

"Alas, yes! brother; I and the other neighbours of Wellbeloved Frugeires entered his house after the Miquelets had gone and we found them dead, he and his wife, hacked to pieces with sabre cuts. This evening they are to be buried—I have left my house and I come to join you, brother, for I had rather live to range the mountains, like a wolf, than to live

* It will be seen that the practice of our own Puritans of the seventeenth century in adopting names intended to express religious affections, qualities, and gifts was followed by the Protestants of the Cevennes at the same period.—Translator.

on a plain where the blood of our people flows every day."

Those who were within hearing of this recital received it with an explosion of fury.

Ephraim had remained pensive. Suddenly a gleam of ferocious joy kindled in his glance, and he said:

"Abraham offered the blood of his son as a burnt offering to the Lord; we must offer him the blood of two Philistines by way of reprisal for the murder of Wellbeloved Frugeires and his wife."

"Whom do you mean?"

"A Moabitish man and woman, who were going to Pont de Mont-Vert, are our prisoners."

"And you design to kill them?" said Cavalier.

"The blood of victims is a sweet savour to the Lord," answered Ephraim.

"The way of reprisals is sometimes dreadful," said Cavalier, with repugnance, "and generally, brother, think well of this, they are only useless cruelties."

"He dares to talk of mercy! at the moment when the blood of our brethren still smokes upon the earth!" cried Ephraim, in a voice of

thunder, pointing to Cavalier. "And his father is in the *ceps*, and his mother and the mother of his mother were dragged upon the hurdle!"

A hoarse murmur of approval followed the words of the Keeper of Aygoal.

The young chieftain cast down his eyes. Ephraim had re-awakened a fearful grief, from the remembrance of which Cavalier had frequently been distracted by the active life which he had for some days led.

"Before we sharpen the axe of sacrifice," said Ephraim, "let us seek counsel from the Spirit of the Lord. Let the boy prophet speak!" and he pointed to Ichabod who slumbered at the foot of a rock. "Let the Moabite first, and then the Moabitish woman be brought hither! Haste ye, for the sun is already high in heaven."

And two mountaineers went for Toinon and Taboureau, who were till then kept prisoners at sight, behind the enormous block of rock which overhung the Black Well.

CHAPTER XXIII.

THE PROPHET.

The sort of public confession made to Cavalier by his betrothed explained to Toinon the meaning of the mysterious words which Isabelle had uttered during her sleep at Alais; "The Marquis of Florac—Wretch!"

Psyche still felt for this girl a jealousy mingled with hate. Still more exasperated by the contempt with which Isabelle spoke of the Marquis, Toinon could have forgiven her for loving Tancred, but not for despising him.

Taboureau was in a state between life and death. Though he cursed internally his fatal complaisance to the caprices of Psyche, this excellent man, far from addressing reproaches to her, tried to calm her, for she was incon-

solable for having involved Claude in an adventure which had ended so fatally.

"Comfort yourself," said the good Cicisbeo, "comfort yourself, dear tigress; if I ever get back I shall be so happy at having escaped this terrible danger, that I shall never think of making the past a crime against you. On the contrary, I shall owe to you the capital stories which I will make of my dangers to the guests at my suppers in the Rue St. Avoye. But if I never return," and Taboureau sighed, "which I confess, would be disgusting to the last degree, for I am hardly thirty-one, and I have an income of a hundred thousand crowns per annum. Well, if I never do return, I shall be too frightened faith! even to think of accusing you with my misfortune. Finally what are we to do? Resign ourselves; for, after all, life, alas! is nothing but a passage—a journey!"

Taboureau was just concluding this melancholy and philosophical reflection, when two mountaineers came to lead him before Ephraim.

During the lamentations of Claude, Psyche, by an inextinguishable feeling of coquetry, had adjusted her dress a little deranged by her

pedestrain journey; she had smoothed and curled her tresses, twisting them round her pretty fingers; she had arranged her brown petticoat, tightened the black laces of her red bodice, and dusted the little shoes of Cordova leather which completed her costume, and nearly fitted her charming little feet, for they had belonged to a child twelve years old.

The two mountaineers then led Claude away. He followed them, trembling, after having cast a glance of despair towards Psyche, as he said to her:

"Adieu, tigress! Adieu, Toinon! The poor Claude was neither handsome, noble, nor brave; but most assuredly he loved you well, and always!"

The Cicisbeo soon appeared before Cavalier and Ephraim.

These chiefs, with Ichabod by their side, stood in the midst of a great circle formed by the rebels.

The mountaineers and the men of the Plain, among whom had spread the news of the murder of Wellbeloved Frugeires, awaited with a fierce impatience the condemnation of the Moabite.

Nearly all the Camisards had been stricken,

either in their friends or in their families, by the inexorable rigour of the Edicts; many of their people had perished by torture or by the sabre of the dragoons. Therefore they considered the execution of Taboureau as a just and terrible reprisal for the cruelties committed by the Catholics upon the Protestants.

Claude, pale, haggard, overwhelmed with terror, could hardly stand; trembling in every limb he leant upon the arms of his two guards. These symptoms of intense fear were far from prepossessing, in his favour, these men, themselves of a savage intrepidity.

Ephraim cast upon him a smile of contempt, and said aloud:

"This Moabite has dared to profane the name of a minister of the Lord; he confesses himself a Catholic—he confesses that he is going to the Abbey of Mont-Vert; it is from that Abbey, from that den of perdition, from that chapel of ease of the great Babylon to which this Moabite is going, that Paul went forth yesterday like a raging wolf to murder an old man and woman. Blood calls for blood. The day of the wrath of the Lord hath come. Israel hath long enough answered blows with groans."

"Yes! yes! let him die, the Philistine! let him die!" cried the Camisards, brandishing their arms. "His death will expiate the death of Well-beloved Frugeires and his wife."

"Let the soldiers of the Lord cast down his head to the Papists as the pledge of a war even unto the death between the children of God and the sons of Baal!" said Esprit-Seguier, the lieutenant of Ephraim.

"He is already condemned by the brethren," continued Ephraim in a loud voice, "but the spirit of man may err, whilst the Spirit of God is infallible. The Lord hath predicted; '*Of thy children I will raise unto myself prophets,*' and he hath fulfilled his promise to Israel. Of children he hath raised unto himself prophets," added the Keeper, pointing to Ichabod; "the Spirit of God is therefore about to speak by his mouth."

This dreadful scene, acting powerfully upon the diseased brain of Ichabod, and exalting his delirious imagination, had brought to a crisis the symptoms of hallucination to which he was subject in common with the other victims of Du Serre. Already he felt the approach of a paroxysm of *enthusiasm* which must necessarily terminate in an attack of catalepsy.

Two or three thousand persons, persuaded of the divinity of his inspirations, fixed upon him looks of respect and almost of fear. Upon his judgment a question of life and death was about to depend. He was himself convinced that these visions, that these internal voices, the echoes and recollections of the passages of Scripture with which his bewildered brain had been laden by Du Serre, were so many direct manifestations of the will of God. Such circumstances must therefore have necessarily produced the determination of his paroxysm.

Ichabod, standing up, his head thrown back, his eyes shut, held his hands raised to Heaven, his breast heaved and sank rapidly; he was of a greenish paleness; drops of cold sweat ran down his forehead; from time to time his eyelids, opening by a convulsive movement, allowed the dim and motionless pupils to become visible.

The Cevennese, attentive to these phenomena which appeared to them supernatural, observed them with a religious terror. All uncovered themselves and knelt down.

Taboureau, as much through the physical inability of standing longer as by a mechanical movement of imitation, fell also on his knees, clasping his hands forcibly together. Believing

himself certain of the immediate approach of his last moment, he addressed to heaven one of those nameless and inarticulate prayers which are rather the despairing cry of the instinct of self-preservation than an expression of religious feeling.

"The Spirit cometh! behold the Spirit! behold the Spirit!" cried the boy. He appeared to listen for a moment; then, as if he repeated words which he heard internally, he shouted with a hoarse, shrill, and broken voice; "'My child! my child! I tell thee, behold the day of the Lord! The Everlasting will roar against the wicked people; he will utterly root out idolatry; he will rend as a lion which hunts the prey. My child! my child! I will call all the birds of heaven to devour the sacrifice of blood which is made ready for me. They shall devour the flesh of the Moabites, even as they devoured the flesh of my children, of my elect. The eagles and the vultures shall bear the morsels to the nests of their young. My child, I tell thee that the Moabites must die, that the little ones of the birds of prey may have their food. Babylon! Babylon! destroy Babylon! Let not one escape, my child, not one. Behold

the whirlwind of my tempest, which arises from the four ends of the earth! Thus let my will be done, my child! I tell it to thee! I tell it to thee!"

As he pronounced these last words, the breathing of Ichabod became more and more painful, foam whitened his lips, his limbs stiffened, his voice was choked, his larynx swelled frightfully, his forehead became of a livid and violet colour, and he soon fell back into a state of complete cataleptic immobility.

The Cevennese, affected, terrified by this spectacle, thought that they heard the voice of God, which demanded blood, and cried out with an enthusiastic fury: "Death to the idolater!"

"The voice of God condemns him as well as the voice of man!" said Esprit Seguier.

"Thou hast heard, thy sacrifice will be a sweet savor to the Lord!" said Ephraim. "To thy prayers! to thy prayers! Before the sun hath gained the summit of that rock thy soul will be before its judge."

Taboureau sank down in a state of utter insensibility.

"Bring his accomplice hither," said Ephraim, "he who condemns the wolf, condemns his

mate. The voice of God hath spoken for the Moabitish woman."

Psyche appeared in the midst of this immense circle, led by two mountaineers.

She walked with a firm step, and borrowed a factitious strength from the excitement of fever and hatred. Her large and undaunted eyes sought Isabelle, whom she wished to brave, even at that fearful moment. Not seeing the fair Cevennese, she cast a glance bright with anger upon Cavalier, another mortal enemy of Tancred.

Cavalier, on the contrary, seeing this young, charming, and resolute form, this exquisite figure which displayed its suppleness and its grace with such effect in the costume of Languedoc, seeing in fine, this living harmony of charms and elegance which he had never been accustomed to behold, felt a hot blush mantle in his cheeks, and received in his heart a shock profound, electric, inexplicable.

Almost terrified by this impression, so sudden, he attributed it to the profound and mournful sentiment of pity with which the horrible fate of this poor girl inspired him; he felt also with terror the impossibility of snatching her from the jaws of death, now

that the prophet had spoken. Though he did not believe them to be divine revelations, while he could not explain the phenomenon of the enthusiasm of the little prophets, Cavalier felt that *there* lay the whole power of the insurrection; that, feigned or real, the voice of God was the only one which could sustain the Cevennese in the war of extermination in which they were about to engage. It was impossible to think, from the moment that the war commenced, of venturing the least infraction of the commands of the prophets.

And still it seemed horrible to allow this lovely girl to perish.

Ephraim, and nearly all the mountaineers, insensible to the attraction of beauty, regarded Psyche with a ferocious impatience; among the men of the plain, some would perhaps have been accessible to a feeling of pity, but the recollection of the murder of well-beloved Frugeires, and their blind faith in the will expressed by the prophet stifled every softer feeling.

"Thou art about to die with thy accomplice. The voice of God hath declared thy fate, haste and say thy prayer," said Ephraim.

The hectic flush in Psyche's cheek turned to a marble pallor; she trembled, and all her

courage, all her life seemed concentrated in her eyes which shone with incredible brilliancy.

"I will die then," said Toinon with a firm voice, "but, O how cowardly it is to murder a woman."

"Make thy prayer," said Ephraim without answering her, "die like a christian and thou shalt have that burial which thy people refused to his mother and his grandmother whom they dragged upon the hurdle," and the Forester pointed to Cavalier.

"But I never did you any harm, I," cried Toinon, "I am a stranger to those horrors."

"What harm had they done? Thou wilt expatiate the crimes of thy people. Make thy prayer."

Psyche saw that she had no pity to hope for; her last thought was Tancred's.

"I am about to die," said she to Ephraim in a voice of profound emotion, "cannot I write a few words? Cannot you cause them to reach —a person whom I will mention to you?"

"Think of the salvation of thy soul, think of the eternal book in which God hath written thy life."

"But this collar (and she unloosed a riband

of black velvet from her charming neck) cannot I send it to—"

"Think of thy soul, of thy soul," repeated Ephraim. "The earth will soon hide thy body."

"Well!" said Psyche with an accent of despair and bursting into tears as she spoke, "before the earth hides my body, who will bury me, when I am dead? You say that you are more generous than my people, well then, grant me this last favour. Let the woman who accompanied me be entrusted with that sad care. Let me say a few words to her.

"Let it be done unto thee as thou wishest," said Ephraim looking round for his fellow chief.

Cavalier had disappeared,

"Isabelle!" said Ephraim.

Isabelle appeared.

"This Moabitish woman would speak to thee; she is about to die; listen to her."

Isabelle regarded Psyche with astonishment and approached her.

Ephraim went away.

The circle was sufficiently wide for the two women to speak to each other without being overheard.

Toinon, at the moment of death, wished at

any sacrifice to ensure that Tancred should receive a last gift of remembrance from her. By a conceivable sentiment of delicacy she preferred to address herself to a woman, to Isabelle! Though she knew the hatred which the latter bore to Tancred, she relied on her generosity and on the interest which she herself must inspire at that dreadful moment.

"I deceived you in order to induce you to be my guide," said Psyche to her; "at this my last moment I ask your forgiveness."

"I forgive you," said Isabelle sorrowfully. "But I also have to ask your pardon, since by leading you here I was the involuntary cause of your death."

"Then if you have any pity for me, you can render me a great service—the last that will be rendered to me on earth."

"Speak, speak, ill-fated woman!"

"Promise me...that after my death...you will bury me...that you alone will touch my body."

And Toinon at this frightful thought put her hand over her eyes which were bathed in tears.

"I swear it to you."

"Promise me also that you will cut off a tress of my hair—that you will bind it to this

velvet collar, and that you will carry both to—" here Psyche hesitated.

"To your mother—poor child?" asked Isabelle with interest.

"I have never known a mother."

"To your father?"

"I have never known a father."

"To one of your relations?"

"I have no relations."

Isabelle regarded Toinon with a sad astonishment.

The latter continued with a solemn voice:

"Before I tell you to whom I would have conveyed this last pledge of my affection, you must swear to me that you will perform my request and forward this legacy to the person whom I shall name to you. Forget not this; it is the last prayer of a dying woman."

"By the memory of my father and of my mother I swear to execute your orders."

"If it is impossible for you to fulfil this duty you will confide it only to a person in whom you can trust as in yourself."

"I swear it."

The eyes of Psyche shone with hope.

"Well then when you have seen me die—when you have seen me buried...you will go to

him for whom I perish. Yes, it was to rejoin *him* that I asked you to be my guide. Oh for pity's sake—let him know how much I loved him! Death will seem to me less frightful if I may hope to win a regret from him—if I am sure that this last pledge of a love the most impassioned—of a remembrance the most constant will be remitted to him."

"But this man—what is his name?"

Psyche was about to pronounce the name of Tancred when she was interrupted by a loud cry raised by the Camisards.

Isabelle and Toinon turned their heads and saw Cavalier appear.

He walked with a slow and majestic step between Celeste and Gabriel whom he led by the hand, and who were both dressed in long, white robes.

CHAPTER XXIV.

THE HOSTAGES.

THE Camisards received Celeste and Gabriel with fresh murmurs of respect and admiration.

A ray of hope glanced upon Toinon and Taboureau on seeing these young, fair creatures, whose charming features were impressed with an inexpressible melancholy and sweetness.

During their stay at the Castle of Mas-Arribas, Celeste and Gabriel had suffered much, like all the victims sacrificed to the infernal project of Du Serre.

They bore a name too much venerated among the Cevennese—their prophecies would have too much influence over the Protestants, at the moment of revolt—for Du Serre to hesitate to subject them to his horrible experiment.

He never found natures more favorable to the working out of that experiment: habitually melancholy, Celeste and Gabriel, progressing from terror to terror, were soon in a state of almost unintermittant hallucination.

Only—in their moments of ecstasy and somnambulism—their prophecies breathed always the ineffable goodness of their hearts; we have said, that these young and simple intellects had from their first childhood so identified themselves with the enchanting poetry of certain Scriptural passages, that the factitious exaltation which was created in their brain, rendered still more adorable the images of sweetness with which it was stored.

In vain Du Serre and his wife had made these children learn the most fearful verses of the Prophets and the Apocalypse; when once the moment of their ecstasy arrived, forgetting these dismal lessons, instead of dreadful menaces of vengeance these two pure and childish voices uttered the divine inspirations of mercy, love and hope.

Then—as nothing is more various than the effects of cataleptic attacks—the accesses to which Celeste and Gabriel were subject had nothing hideous. They manifested themselves

by the flushing of the cheeks, and by a complete immobility; but, as some beings are gifted with a natural grace which extends to their every action, the attitudes in which Celeste and Gabriel remained, as it were, petrified during the continuance of their fits, were nearly always charming; one would have thought them two beautiful statues endowed by a miracle with life.

The beauty, the sweetness and the prophetic enthusiasm of these two children made them religiously respected by the followers of Cavalier, who shared the general superstition in regard to these little prophets.

Since the night of the dreadful storm in which all these children had scattered themselves over the plain calling Israel to arms, Mount Aygoal had become a new Sinai for the Protestants.

Cavalier himself, though he was in appearance and policy as credulous and as fanatical as Ephraim, yet wavering habitually between his secret incredulity and the evidence of the phenomena which he could not explain, in spite of himself regarded his brother and sister with a sort of veneration mixed with fear.

Wishing to make an effort to save Toinon, Cavalier went to find Celeste and Gabriel; he knew by experience that profound and sudden emotion frequently provoked their prophetic paroxysms. So, since they had rejoined him, these poor children had undergone several attacks on learning successively the arrest of their father, the death of their mother and that of their grandmother.

The bare remembrance of the horrid circumstances attending those deaths plunged them into a species of stupor proceeding from despair from which they never recovered except through a cataleptic fit.

"They are going to murder a man and woman immediately before your eyes, and drag their bodies on a hurdle, for the Spirit of the Lord, speaking by the voice of Ichabod, has demanded this bloody sacrifice," said Cavalier to the two children.

Celeste and Gabriel looked at each other with consternation, exclaiming:

"We will not see this murder!"

"But you must! Poor children! if you seek to prevent it—"

"No, no!" said Celeste, hiding her face in

her hands, "these bodies on a hurdle—that recalls to my eyes—O, my mother! my mother!—"

"And our grandmother—our grandmother!' rejoined Gabriel, already almost distracted at the bare thought of this frightful event.

"God is good and merciful; his Spirit also inspires peace and pardon," said Celeste. "My brother, my brother, why this murder? Alas too much blood has been shed already. The Spirit, the sweet Spirit of the Lord hath said it," added Celeste, looking around her wildly.

When Cavalier saw these children under this powerful impression, he hoped that the sight of the preparations for the execution of Toinon and Taboureau would perhaps so far excite the pity of the two little prophets as to suggest to them some words of commiseration.

Such was the motive of their presence at the place of execution.

The Camisards, thinking that the two children came, like Ichabod, to witness the punishment of the Moabites, redoubled their cries of death.

At this fresh explosion of fury Taboureau with a cadaverous countenance, with convulsed

features, on his knees, and with clasped hands, made a last effort to cry out:

"Mercy! mercy! all my fortune to save my life!"

Ephraim smiled disdainfully, and said:

"Esprit Seguier, make the brethren load their muskets. These Moabites shall die a soldier's death. It is time that the hand of the Lord should fall upon them."

At the orders of Ephraim, several mountaineers loaded their guns.

"Have you said your prayers?" demanded the Forester, in a thundering voice of the two sufferers.

Cavalier, his eyes eagerly fixed upon Celeste and Gabriel, was in dreadful anguish, fearing to guess the effect which this shocking scene might produce upon them.

The two children held each other by the hand; their angelic features were pale and contracted; fear dilated the pupils of their large blue eyes. They pressed trembling against each other.

Six mountaineers approached; the matches of their muskets were smoking.

The rebels divided, and drew themselves up

in two lines; at the extremity of these lines were seen Taboureau, Toinon, and Isabelle.

"Bandage their eyes, brother, they are afraid;" said Ephraim to Esprit-Seguier, with a smile of savage scorn.

Taboureau had not strength enough to cry for mercy. He offered his forehead to the fatal bandage.

The executioner approached Psyche. She looked for Isabelle; she was not there; she had not possessed the strength to be present at this terrible spectacle. Not seeing her, Toinon said with despair: "Oh! not even that—not even one last remembrance!" Then, seizing the hand of Claude, she kissed it affectionately, saying to him: "Adieu my friend, at this last moment pardon me your death."

"I pardon you. May God have mercy upon my soul!" murmured the Cicisbeo in a feeble voice.

Toinon in her turn presented her forehead of snow to the fatal bandage; then she raised her two hands to her lips, and seemed to send kisses into empty space, saying with a low voice: "Tancred, my Tancred, it is for thee!" Then Toinon sought to abstract herself in prayer.

"Brethren!" said Ephraim, in a solemn voice, "let us sing the Death Psalm. Let their spirits be comforted, since their bodies are about to perish!"

And all the Camisards raised, with a sad and subdued voice, these verses of the Psalm of the Dead:

"Lord God, with woe my heart is filled,
And doth in trouble dwell,
My life and breath almost doth yield,
And draweth nigh to hell.

I am esteemed as one of those
That in the pit do fall,
And made as one among the men
Who have no strength at all.

As those dead men who lie in grave,
Whom thou hast all forgot;
Those whom thy hand hath cut away,
And thou regardest not."*

These death-chants were repeated to infinitude by the echoes of Rhan-Jastrie.

* These words are taken from the old version of the 88th. psalm.

The mountaineers made ready to fire.

The countenances of Celeste and Gabriel, till then pale and icy, became suddenly animated; their cheeks coloured up, their looks, once timid and alarmed, became brilliant and inspired. They appeared to grow taller, as they proudly raised their bright and lovely heads.

Cavalier felt an unspeakable joy at these ecstatic symptoms; he made some of his followers remark the appearances of prophetic rapture in the children.

Ephraim was about to give the order for the execution, when he heard an increasing murmur.

"The Spirit of the Lord is about to speak again," said the Camisards, pointing with respect, to the two children whose exaltation became more and more apparent.

"The execution must be suspended till the voice of the Lord has been heard once more to command it!" exclaimed Cavalier.

The Forester of Aygoal, not imagining that the sentence of Ichabod could be contradicted by this new manifestation of the Divine Will, did not oppose the respite, but said; "the voice of the Lord is always holy and precious

in our ears; the trumpet has more than once sounded the hour of the destruction of the Philistines!"

"The Spirit of the Lord is about to speak," cried Cavalier, "kneel brethren, kneel!"

All knelt down.

Celeste, who was the first to reach the paroxysm of enthusiasm, said in a sweet and musical voice, closing her lovely eyes; "My child, I tell thee—to-day—my child,—of blood I will not—of sacrifices I will not—of victims I will not accept. The flowers of the field, these are the offerings which I ask. The songs of birds, those are the victims I require. If the cruel wolf devours the sheep—kill him without mercy—but I tell thee, my child, I tell thee now, grace and mercy for those who are weak and unarmed; grace and mercy for women and children. Israel shall be without pity—but only for the warriors armed with the sword and the spear. Soon a great battle will be fought—and after it, the vine shall bear her fruit, the earth shall bring up her seed, the heavens shall shed their dew, and peace shall blossom over all the earth. Till then—pity—forgiveness and mercy."

As she pronounced these last words the

breathing of Celeste became difficult, the child threw her head back by a convulsive movement, and fell on her knees in a state of immovable rigidity, having her hands clasped and her face half-turned towards the rising sun, which seemed to encircle her with a golden glory. To see this adorable creature kneeling thus, one would have thought her one of those statues of angels in prayer which are sculptured upon monuments.

Ephraim, struck with surprise, gazed on Celeste with savage wonder; but his respect for the expression of her Divine Will was so profound that he contented himself with saying: "The Lord alone is our guide; his voice is mysterious."

At these words of mercy, Toinon and Taboureau, whose eyes were still bandaged, thought that they heard a voice from heaven; a new hope glanced some rays into the black abyss in which their souls were plunged.

The Camisards, astounded, and hesitating, looked at one another; their rude minds could not comprehend this apparent contradiction in the Divine Will as expressed by the two prophets.

Suddenly Gabriel who had not as yet spoken,

displayed the same symptoms of exaltation as his sister, and exclaimed extending his hand toward the west with a gesture both of attention and command.

"My child, my child, I tell thee that a great sound of trumpets is heard on that side, the chariots of war ring like mail, the horses neigh for battle—Israel! Israel! now is the hour to pray to the Lord of Hosts! Now is the hour to gird thee for the battle; but I tell thee, I tell thee to spare the children and the weak—I tell thee that one life spared may save another life. My child! be of good heart, after sorrow cometh joy. Thou shalt see a green orchard which shall bear its fruit in every season; its verdure shall be ever in blossom; the fruit shall be gathered with the flower. Jerusalem, Jerusalem! rejoice, behold the husbandman who shall tend the vine! behold him who shall rebuild thy walls; but take up thy sword and delay not—the hour passes away, and with it the chariots prepared for battle, and this evening, when the sun sets, the Moabites will have escaped out of thy hands. To your swords! to your swords! my child, I tell thee this day: 'Smite ye the strong, spare ye the weak!' my tempest beats down the harvest, it uproots the

forest, it tears down the tower, it uplifts the flood, but I tell thee, I tell thee, it spares the flower of the field and the lowly herb."*

+ Note by the Author. These two prophecies are almost literally taken from a very rare and curious work called "The Sacred Theatre of the Cevennes, or Testimonials of the Miraculous things lately come to pass in the Cevennes." London, Robert Roger, Blackfriars 1707. Appended to this work is another, equally rare and curious, the title of which is "Prophetical Warnings of Elias Marion, heretofore one of the commanders of the Protestants that had taken up arms in the Cevennes, or Discourses uttered by him in London under the operation of the Spirit, and faithfully taken in writing whilst they were spoken. Ibib.

Note by the Translator. The reader will probably thank me for the following specimen from the Warnings of Marion which contains the passages referred to by M. Sue in the above note.

"Ah, my children, take courage ye poor oppressed ones! Poor scattered sheep! Your God will feed you! Behold your consolation! Behold your God comes armed with peace and mercy. Rejoice ye children of Sion! Lo the Lamb comes! Behold Him who is going to re-establish his kingdom in Jerusalem and to give you to drink at the river of the waters of his Grace. The waters of Siloam will quickly diffuse themselves over many nations of the earth. Many shall see my son who have not known him, and many shall take offence. But wo to them by whom they shall be offended! The union of my Church with my son is about to be renewed. She shall, in a few days, take new roots and wholly cast off those dry branches and throw

As he pronounced these words with a voice which gradually became weaker and weaker, Gabriel fell down by the side of his sister.

them into the fire. Thou shalt see a green garden fresh and flourishing, bringing forth its fruit in every season. Its greenness shall be the ornament of my house. It shall blossom in every season of the year. The fruit shall be plucked with the flower. All shall be gathered together. Jerusalem! Jerusalem! rejoice. Behold the workman comes to take the work in hand. Lo here is He that is to raise thy walls; lo here is He that is to fill thy land with shouts of joy. Lo here is thy God, who comes to visit thee."

Prophetical Warnings &c. p. 41.

Be assured, my child, that I will call the fowls of heaven to devour the sacrifice which I am to make in a few days of the inhabitants of the Earth. They shall devour their flesh as they have heretofore devoured the flesh of my children. My most precious jewels have been torn in pieces, and swallowed down in the bowels of the beasts of the earth. I will now feed them with the flesh of mine enemies for the avenging of mine Elect. The lion and the lion's whelp shall feed upon the flesh of the wicked. The Earth shall even stink with it. The air shall be infected with the slaughter that I will make upon Babylon. My eye shall be satiated, my wrath shall exhaust itself upon this wretched people who have forsaken me..... Behold Babylon! my child. Babylon hath taken the medicine, but she would not accept of a cure. Many shall repent and amend at my name, when they see the wirlwind of my tempest, which shall be kindled in the four

Cavalier, seeing the profound impression which these words had produced upon the Camisards, cried out:

"The Lord cries aloud to you by the voice of these children 'To arms!' The Philistines will escape us if we delay longer; the Lord in his mercy has been touched by our obedience. He said 'strike!' and we were about to strike," and Cavalier pointed to the two knelling victims, "then He had compassion. When Abraham had stretched forth his hand and took the knife to slay his son, God was satisfied

quarters of the Earth. Do my will, my child. I leave thee my blessing. Rely upon my word and fear not that I will leave thee.

Prophetical Warnings. p. 74.

O my children, what glory, what joy, what triumph, what magnificence, what pleasures, what delights are my children going to receive! Behold them, they are coming down in a mighty stream! Behold that sea, those bottomless deeps of Grace, that ocean which is coming down, that bright splendour which is to inflame the whole earth, that celestial fire, which must kindle your hearts. Will you any longer resist to follow me? Will you always be hardened in the world? I reach with my hand, and I stretch forth my hand unto you my children. Come my children, let me embrace you. Whatever floods do come, and winds do blow I am thy God and thy rock.

Prophetical Warnings. p. 60.

and said to him,—'It is sufficient.' The Lord commands us to spare these prisoners; let us spare them, let us keep them as hostages. If one of our people falls into the hand of the Moabites, the Lord hath said—'One life shall save another life.' But the voice of the Lord calls us. To arms, Cevennese! Follow me, brave men of the plain! the dragoons are ours! To arms, brave mountaineers, the Abbey of Pont de Mont-Vert is yours! the Lord is with us. He hath told us that the hour passes away. To arms! to arms."

"To arms! to arms!" cried with one voice and with enthusiasm the men of the Plain as they rose and surrounded Cavalier.

The mountaineers, also excited by this warlike address, returned the same answer. Ephraim, persuaded that the Spirit of the Lord had decreed the pardon of the two victims, said to Esprit Seguier, "The will of the Lord is infinitely great; bind these two moabites, they shall follow us." Then he continued with a loud voice: "To arms, brethren of the mountain, to arms; This is the first day of the harvest; it will be terrible! the sharp sickle is in the hands of the labourers of the Lord; to arms!"

At the voice of their chiefs, the Camisards pressed around them tumultuously in order to follow them along the two opposite slopes of the Rhan-Jastrie; one body descended towards the west, in the direction of the Abbey of Pont de Mont-Vert, and the other towards the east, in that of the defile of the hill of Ancize.

Toinon and Taboureau, so unexpectedly delivered, were put under the guard of two stout mountaineers, and were carried away, so to speak, in this formidable whirlwind.

Cavalier, absorbed in the ardour of war, of hate, and of vengeance, called to Ephraim in a far-resounding voice, at the moment that he descended the slope of the mountain: "Brother Ephraim, the Marquis is mine!"

"Brother Cavalier, the Arch-Priest is mine!" answered Ephraim.

"Let us march!" cried Cavalier, and he placed himself at the head of his men, not without casting one last, long glance towards Toinon, saying: "She is saved! How lovely she is!"

* * * * * *

The two rebel chiefs and their troops had soon abandoned the desert platform of the volcano, and a death-like silence again reigned over that awful solitude.

CHAPTER XXV.

THE ABBEY.

PONT DE MONT-VERT is a considerable village, built on the banks of the Tarn, a river which takes its source in the chain of the Cevennes.

At the western extremity of this village, on the side of the road of Tressinet de Lozere, rose the ruins of an ancient abbey.

This edifice, of a character at once military and monastic, had been partly destroyed during the civil and religious wars of the past century; it was built on a species of peninsula, formed by the curve of one of the arms of the Tarn, whose windings bathed the foot of the high walls of the Abbey to the north, east, and west.

A solitary door, the access to which was

afforded by a bridge, opened to the south, not far from the road of Tressinet.

Hardly any vestiges remained of the chapel, and of the principal buildings of this monastery. The inner court of the cloister, with its four galleries on the cardinal points, with its heavy Roman arches, had alone been respected. The doors of the cells opened upon these galleries. Those cells were then occupied by the Arch-Priest, by his retinue, by Captain Paul, and by the Miquelets in charge of the Protestant prisoners, who were confined in the vast cellars of the abbey.

The number of these last was very considerable; the Abbé du Chayla had not dared to send them to Nismes before the arrival of the reinforcements which he had asked from M. de Baville, fearing lest this convoy might be rescued by the Religionists.

On the very day of the gathering of the Camisards upon the table-land of the Rhan-Jastrie, about four o'clock in the afternoon, Captain Paul, after reviewing his Miquelets, returned to the cell which he occupied, followed by his serjeant, Master Bon Larron.

Captain Paul wore, by way of dressing-gown, an old Turkish pelisse, the produce of

his prizes in the war of Hungary; a red hood covered his close-cut hair. This strange head-dress gave to his features, naturally savage, a still more sinister expression. When he entered his room, he threw himself down gloomily into a chair of richly carved walnut wood which had doubtless once belonged to one of the dignitaries of the Abbey.

Master Bon Larron, seeing the bad humour of his captain, waited respectfully till the latter addressed him.

At last Paul cried out, striking the table with anger:

"The devil take the service which we do here! It is six weeks since we left the Abbey, except for that foray into the open country; and, by Mahom! it had a fine result—the murder of that old farmer and his wife."

"Do not speak to me of it, Captain," said the Serjeant, shrugging his shoulders. "It all arose out of a silly idea of that obstinate fellow Robin the Morisco, he thought that he would find in that farm the hen with the eggs of gold. The fool! I fancy he might have used all the musket-matches of the company on the farmer's skin, by way of interrogatories, without making anything by it. However, it was not all dead

loss for us on that occasion; our friends set themselves up in body linen, and God knows they had a furious want of that article, for it was never their favourite extravagance."

"Go to the Devil! Our men grow rusty here. Do dogs gain wind and strength by keeping the sheep penned for the shambles? I myself am choking, and fit to die for very weariness between these four walls. This Arch-Priest is more dumb and cold than the statue out there on that Abbot's old tomb. When that insolent Marquis is here, he passes his days in playing the lute, trying on his perruques, tying bows, or scraping his nails. The miracles of Mount Aygoal, as these dogs of heretics call them, seemed to promise a revolt. But no! they are too cowardly, they dare not venture it; nothing stirs, nothing will stir!"

"Ah! Captain, don't think that. Patience! Patience! Robin the Morisco, who went to reconnoitre this morning on the side of Tressinet with ten of our men, found nearly all the houses of the village deserted. Where are all those people? Assembled, I am sure, in some of the caverns of their mountains from which they will pour down upon us like a horde of wolves."

"Bah! bah! those people were out harvesting!"

"But you forget, my noble Captain, that all the fields of the fugitive Protestants have been gathered in by a certain reaper, who never leaves an ear behind him to be gleaned, and only asks a minute an acre to leave a field as shorn as my felt."

"What do you mean? what reaper?"

"Eh! eh! what think you of Master *Fire?*"

"You bring to my recollection, in fact, that all the corn of the Plain of Pont de Mont-Vert was to be burnt by the order of the Lieutenant."

"There you see, Captain, is something to relieve your melancholy. The night promises to be fine, the flames will be seen all the better; it will be, *vive Dieu!* a regular bon-fire. That will cheer up our lads a little who seem to be dull."

"Do you know one thing?" said Paul, after a moment's reflection. "In the war, in Turkey, Field Marshal Rutter caused six Polish troopers to be flogged to death for having laid waste a field of ripe corn in the enemy's territory."

"But that enemy was a Musulman, Captain,

and the priests always say that the heretics are a thousand times more damned and damnable than the Turks."

"That may be, I am not a theologian. But confound this station! I feel myself quite benumbed and heavy."

This complaint of Captain Paul awakened the medical and pharmaceutic propensities of his serjeant. Faithful to his habit of taking away with him *keepsakes* from all the lodgings which he left, Master Bon Larron had abstracted a medicine chest from an apothecary at Usez. Wishing to utilize this theft for the benefit of his company, he had chosen to undertake the treatment of the sick Miquelets, by mixing at random some unlabelled drugs which he possessed. The various effects of this strange process, sometimes fatal, and sometimes negative, had not discouraged the Serjeant, who bravely continued his experiments, and who now seized the opportunity of *practising* upon his Captain.

"You feel yourself benumbed, Captain? Well, if you please, I will mix you a little draught which is sovereign in all cases of hypochondria. There is among the phials of my medicine chest a certain drug which shines like

crystal, and the very sparkle of which could not fail to enliven the dead."

"May the plague choke you with your draught. You have been the death of all my Miquelets who dared to taste your devil's kitchen."

"If my draughts did not succeed with those obstinate fellows, it was because they took too much or not enough; and as I will myself administer to you the dose of that brilliant drug which I have reason to believe so cordial—"

"And I will myself administer to you a hundred blows of a stirrup leather, if you dare to speak to me again of your poisonous messes, and if you dare to try them upon my soldiers; do you hear me?"

"I hear you perfectly, worthy captain, although nothing could be more innocent than the little remedy which I wished to propose to you."

The captain was going to reply to his Serjeant with considerable asperity, when a loud noise of voices was heard in the court. Paul stepped out; and saw the Brigadier Larose surrounded by Miquelets, he was alighting from his horse. He was pale and covered with dust and blood; his disordered accoutrements, and the blackened

carbine which hung at his saddle bow, sufficiently told that an engagement had just taken place between the insurgents and the dragoons.

The Brigadier seemed anxious and irritated. "Don't crowd upon me this way!" said he, as he rudely repulsed the irregulars who surrounded him with curiosity, and assailed him with questions: "I have nothing on me worth stealing. All that you will get out of me is a good buffet. If you do not let me go to Monseigneur the Arch-priest—"

Captain Paul, advancing through the Miquelets, asked the Brigadier what the news was.

"That is just what I am going to tell the Arch-priest," answered Larose abruptly. "If you want to know, captain, follow me."

"Do you not know whom you speak to?" cried Paul with violence, incensed at the irreverence of the Brigadier.

"I know still better to whom I must speak to obey the orders of the captain," replied the dragoon, proceeding in the direction of the cell occupied by the Abbé of Chayla.

Paul, in spite of his anger, knew that he would get nothing out of a man as obstinate as

Larose. He followed him to the apartment of the Arch-priest.

The Abbe du Chayla was employed with his secretary, when the Brigadier entered followed by the chief of the Miquelets.

"Monseigneur," said Larose, "my captain, M. the Marquis of Florac is killed or a prisoner, the Cornet is certainly killed. Of our whole company there are not twenty dragoons left alive. Perhaps before an hour you will be attacked by the Fanatics."

"Then they do shew at last?" said Paul with a savage joy.

"Yes, yes; and you will see them perhaps before you want them," said the Brigadier who still seemed under the influence of some great terror.

Despite his usual apathy the Abbé appeared disturbed by this intelligence.

"What do you say? explain yourself;" he said to the dragoon.

"You know, Monseigneur, that by the orders of the Captain, I set out for Montpellier with letters from him and you addressed to Monseigneur the Marechal de Montrevel.

"Well!" said the Abbé with anxiety.

"On the road I met no worse accident than

a pretty lady who inquired after the Captain, and made me drink a certain wine and eat a certain pie—"

"But these letters, these letters!" cried the Abbot interrupting Larose.

"True, Monseigneur, the wine was drunk, so we'll say no more about it. I reach Montpellier, I give my letters to M. de Baville. M. de Baville told me to go and refresh myself at his buttery, and that I should march back the next day with two companies of fusiliers of the regiment of Calvisson, that they were sending you for a reinforcement, Monseigneur. I was to serve as their guide."

"And these troops?" asked the Arch-priest.

"These troops? Three quarters of them are killed, and the rest are broken and flying in every direction, and will no doubt be massacred in detail by the fanatics."

"Then the rebels have attacked you? They are in considerable force?"

"Say that they were ten thousand, twenty thousand," said Paul with an air of contempt, "they would be only twenty thousand clod-hoppers or cowfeeders. I would engage *mordieu!* to make them scatter like a cloud of gnats at the very sight of the jerkins of my Miquelets."

Larose was about to reprimand smartly this gasconnade of the Guerilla, but the Abbé rejoined:

"Where were you attacked?"

"Five leagues off, on the road to Nismes, at the place which they call the Hill of Saint Andre d' Ancise; we met then the Marquis de Florac who was marching to meet us with his company. Having left this place in the morning, he had made a great circuit to reconnoitre and clear the neighbourhood as he came to join us."

"In point of fact," said the Abbé, "he left the Abbey at break of day."

"After an hour's halt, we took up the road of Pont de Mont-Vert, and we continued to engage ourselves in the defile. We had gone two leagues, and were about to leave it, when one of the videttes of our vanguard fell back to acquaint the Marquis that there was seen at the mouth of the defile, on the skirt of a wood, a considerable assemblage of men without arms. The Captain ordered a halt and sent me forward to reconnoitre. I found some hundred or so of peasants and mountaineers, bareheaded and listening to a man in black who was preaching to them."

"What audacity! in open day, under the very eyes of the troops," said the Abbé.

"The audacity did not stop there," answered Larose, "it went a little farther, as you will see. I come back at full gallop to tell the Captain that it was a field-meeting. 'Take ten troopers, charge those vagabonds and scatter them,' said the Captain, 'if they resist, ride them down, but do not fire till the last extremity, for I hate these butcheries.' I take ten men with me; I advance; the preacher was still bawling away with all his might. 'In the King's name, disperse! take to your heels vagabonds, and get into the fields, or you will feel our horses' shoulders.' —'Ride thy ways, brother, and leave in peace the people of the Lord, to implore his mercy for the evils which afflict them,' said the preacher. 'What! I ride my ways, dog of a heretic!' said I, going to him to take him by the collar, 'it is when I have tied you to my horse's tail that I will ride my ways, and you shall go with me.' And as I spoke, I grabbed my man—"Brethren,' he then cried out, 'on your knees, and raise the psalm of the deliverance of Israel.' And, lo! and behold! all the bellowers, male and female, for

there were women and even children in the assembly, begun to set up their infernal psalm to a tune fit to raise the devil, and with noise enough to wake the dead. Tired of this row, the Marquis leaves the ranks, and comes up at full gallop with some horsemen; he tries to make the psalmsingers hold their tongues with musket-butts; but all to no purpose; their skins are too tough on the side of religion. It is no good thumping them; they continue to sing; only after each stave, they set up a shout enough to make you deaf—When the psalm was over, the preacher, whom two men were beginning to manacle, said to M. the Marquis: 'In the name of the living God, I protest against the violence of your soldiers. We are inoffensive; we worship God as our fathers worshipped him; leave us alone.'—'Yes, yes, we are doing no harm, leave us alone,' said the psalmsingers.—'In the name of God, disperse instantly, or I will fire upon you as I ought to have done before,' answered the Captain. But what you will never believe, Monseigneur, is that this preacher, whom I was just going to tie to the tail of my horse, said to M. the Marquis: 'And I, for the last time, in the name of the living

God, summon you and your troops to retire, and to leave us in peace.'—You will admit, Monseigneur, that when the thieves begin to stop the police, it becomes rather too good a joke; so M. the Marquis, making a half circuit, not to fire breast to muzzle, made us send a volley at thirty paces distance.

"Really, he made up his mind to that at last! that was very fortunate," said Paul, with a bitter laugh. "And doubtless he ordered you to fire over their heads?"

"All at once, Monseigneur," continued Larose, too engrossed with his story to regard the interruption of the Guerilla, "we heard a terrible chant, which seemed to rise out of the earth; a horrible fire opens upon us from the wood, and takes us in flank; we had gone head foremost into an ambuscade."

"An armed rebellion! Oh, what blood, what blood is about to flow!" said the Abbé, raising his gloomy looks to heaven.

"And the infantry was drawn up in battle order I hope, on the outside of the ravine, to crown it?" exclaimed Paul.

"Unfortunately, no!" said Larose, "it remained with shouldered arms in the defile. Who could have expected an attack? So after

their volley, the Fanatics, who were two or three thousand strong, rushed out of the forest like madmen, charged us furiously, and drove us back into the ravine, where we trampled down our own infantry, who were coming up as fast as they could to help us, so we prevented their fire. To finish us, a number of these brigands showed themselves on the crests of the defile, and from thence riddled us with shots and huge rocks, which they rolled down upon us. The entrance of the hollow way, by which we might have escaped, was defended with desperation by a band of madmen, led by a demon incarnate named John Cavalier, formerly an exile at Geneva."

"The son of Jerome Cavalier, who is here in the *ceps*? the farmer of St. Andéol?" asked the Abbé, who, at this moment, could not help recalling, with a secret horror, the scene of the hurdle.

"He himself, Monseigneur. But these brigands must have been taught to use their arms by some old soldier; I never saw a platoon fire kept up better than theirs; you would have thought it a roll of drums. Thrice we tried to force that pass; and thrice we were repulsed. The ravine was so narrow that six

men could hardly march abreast; we were in the way of the infantry, and the infantry in ours; we were falling as thick as flies; at last my Captain said to me: 'Larose, we will try one charge more, and if you manage to ride over the bellies of these brigands, try to gallop to the Abbey, to warn Monseigneur the Arch-Priest of our defeat.' At the moment when he gave this order, the fire of the Fanatics abated a little; we charged so fiercely that we knocked some of them over, and made a gap in their ranks; but they soon closed up; behind me happily; for I had got through them. Whilst I was clapping both spurs to my horse, I turned round, I saw my poor Captain fall from his horse, and that infernal John Cavalier run up to him with his sabre raised.

"Is the Marquis dead? is he a prisoner?"

"I know not, Monseigneur; if I had had the least chance of helping him, I would not have abandoned him, but I saw the rebels form again after this charge, and pour down the defile, singing one of their psalms with a thundering voice. The infantry must have been massacred. As for the cavalry, the few who were left might have sounded a retreat, and gained the other issue of the defile. The

only thing that can be hoped, is that if some of the fugitives may gain Montpellier and give the alarm there, M. the Marechal will send sufficient troops, and we shall be relieved."

Paul had listened to the story of Larose with attention; he seemed to think deeply and to forget his former disdainful audacity.

"These rascals open the campaign with a brilliant advantage over regular troops; that is not a good sign," said he, shaking his head. "The horse which once bites his master with impunity becomes dangerous and untameable."

"But you are wounded!" said the Archpriest to the Brigadier, remarking the blood which stained his uniform.

"Yes, monseigneur, in the shoulder I believe, but it is nothing to signify for I do not feel it. Ah Monseigneur what a war! I was in Holland and in the Palatinate but I never saw such demons! I saw some of them, who had no arms but a fragment of rock in each hand, throw themselves head foremost upon our ranks and dispatch our wounded with blows. To be sure these madmen were cut down upon the body of their victims, but all the same it was horrible to see!"

"What do you think, Captain?" said the Arch-priest to Paul with his usual calm. "What dispositions do you judge necessary to secure our prisoners if the rebels attack the Abbey?"

"I will go and take another look at the exterior, and do for the best, M. l' Abbé. As for you, my lad, do not say a word of this to my Miquelets, or you may make them share your panic."

"If the dragoons of Saint Sernin turned rein, it was when braver soldiers than the Miquelets would have given ground; there is no panic in that," said Larose angrily.

"I doubt not your courage, nor that of your captain, my lad; but it requires a certain degree of practice to support with coolness the attack of these madmen. I have seen hordes of Bulgarians, half savages and armed only with stakes and slings, put to rout the best and oldest Imperial troops; but that does not last; tactics and discipline soon carry it over the ferocity of these briganda."

"I count on you captain, to secure the defence of the Abbey and the safe-guard of the prisoners," said the Arch-priest to Paul, "and you Larose, go and find the laybrother who

attends me; he has some knowledge of surgery and is able to treat a common case."

The Guerilla and the Brigadier retired; the Abbe du Chayla remained alone with his secretary.

CHAPTER XXVI.

THE ATTACK.

THE night was clear, calm and star-bright; the battlements of the Abbey stood darkly out against the deep blue of the firmament. Some bright lights gleamed from its windows, reflected on the waters of the Tarn, in little ripples of fire. A few scattered luminous points also sparkled from amidst the sombre and distant mass of the houses of the village built on the right and left of the cloister; on its right a woody mountain loomed dimly through the darkness. The road of Fressinet de Lozere, which led to the Abbey gate, was distinguishable, notwithstanding the night by its chalky colour.

After traversing vast plains, brown and de-

solate, this road disappeared at the horizon between two hills.

By degrees the lights of the town were put out, eleven o'clock struck, the windows of the Abbey alone retained their lights.

All at once the profound silence of the night was broken by a hoarse and distant noise.

It approached; it became more distinct; it was the tread of a great multitude; a black mass appeared at the horizon on the crest of the hill; the chalky whiteness of the road to Fressinet soon disappeared beneath the dark, silent, and headlong waves of this crowd which soon deluged the Plain like a torrent which has burst its banks.

Suddenly a strong and sonorous voice cried aloud:

"Halt, brethren!"

The crowd halted in profound silence at about five hundred paces from the Abbey. Ephraim, for he it was, at the head of two thousand wood-cutters and mountaineers whom he had assembled in arms upon the Rhan-Jastrie, Ephraim ascended an eminence from which he commanded the assemblage. Ichabod, his young prophet, stood beside him, still pale

and haggard, and gasping with the fatigue of the long march.

During the journey, Ephraim had not left his side; the ferocious boy confessed still more and more the influence of the forester, while he affected him with his own still more and more.

In the eyes of the Keeper of Aygoal, Ichabod was visited by the Lord; in the eyes of Ichabod, Ephraim was one of those fearful ministers of the wrath of God, so often cited in the gloomy lessons of Du Serre.

Mysterious, profound, and, questionless, magnetic relations began to establish themselves between these two beings, possessed by the same sanguinary delusion.

Sometimes Ephraim's look appeared to fascinate the boy-prophet, whose delirious fancies then evoked the most sinister predictions, after which he fell struck by one of his cataleptic fits.

But it was always with a sort of respectful terror that Ephraim in his turn cast down his eyes beneath the fixed and burning glance of Ichabod, when the boy's shrill voice, repeating the most terrible prophecies of Scripture, sum-

moned Israel with loud cries to the massacre of the children of Belial.

The religionists, grouped round Ephraim and Ichabod, awaited in silence the orders of their chief.

"Brethren!" said the Forester pointing to the Abbey with his axe, "your fathers, your sisters, your mothers, your wives, and your children are there in the *ceps*. The wolf, who ravens the prey of souls, the Arch-Priest of Baal keeps them in chains. He is surrounded with Miquelets, with the murderers of Well-beloved Frugeires and his wife. Blood calls aloud for blood! Ichabod! Ichabod! what saith the Spirit? Doth it command the sacrifice?"

And Ephraim awaited the answer of the prophet, who soon pronounced in a harsh voice these broken and distorted passages of the Book of Isaiah:

"'My child, my child, I tell thee to lift a banner upon the high mountain, to exalt thy voice unto my soldiers that they may go into the gates of the nobles.

"'I have summoned my mighty ones to be the weapons of my anger.

"'Howl ye, for the day of the Lord is at

hand; it shall come as a destruction from the Almighty.

"'Behold the day of the Lord cometh, with wrath and with fierce anger, to lay the land desolate, and he shall destroy the sinners out of it.

"They shall be more greedy of the blood of a man than of fine gold. Every one that is found within the walls of Babylon shall be thrust through; and every one that is joined unto them shall fall by the sword."

As Ichabod spoke, his agitation became more violent, his voice became more harsh and thrilling; sweat ran down his forehead. When his exhortation was ended, he leant upon Ephraim, apparently in a state of complete exhaustion.

Then the Forester cried in a loud and solemn voice; "Brethren, the Spirit saith by the mouth of its prophets, 'Every one that is found within the walls of Babylon shall be thrust through, and every one that is joined unto them shall fall by the sword! What is the Abbey? Is it not Babylon?"

"To Babylon! to Babylon!" cried the nearest mountaineers, brandishing their weapons, "kill, kill the papists!"

"Let the will of the Lord be done!" said the Forester. "On! brethren! on!"

"Brother, how shall we attack? What shall be our order of battle?" demanded Esprit-Seguier from Ephraim, at the moment of advance.

"How shall we attack? What order?" repeated the latter with a sort of contemptuous astonishment. "How does the lion attack his prey? what order does the eagle follow when he swoops down upon his quarry? To the one God hath given fangs, to the other talons; to both his courage and his strength, and he saith to them. 'Go and rend sheep or bull, dove or serpent." Brethren, brethren, Babylon is ours since God is with us."

"Yes, yes, God is with us!" repeated the mountaineers inflamed by the words of Ephraim; "Babylon is ours!"

"On, brethren, on! the hour is come," he repeated and he advanced rapidly towards the Abbey. He held Ichabod with one hand and with the other brandished his axe.

All this half armed multitude, without discipline, without order of battle, or tactics, but exasperated by an impetuous and devouring enthusiasm, precipitated itself tumultuously on the steps of their chief, as blind as he was intrepid.

The distance which separated the rebels from the Abbey was soon crossed; they arrived near the bridge without experiencing the least resistance, and perceived then for the first time that a high and strong palisade had been raised at its extremity and upon its sides, to defend the passage.

The rebels, assembled in one compact mass, near this palisade and along the bank of the Tarn, consulted in a low voice, what was to be done to force this unforeseen obstacle, when Ephriam was the first to raise his heavy axe and dealt a terrible blow upon one of the trunks of the trees which formed the palisade crying aloud, in the words of the prophet:

"'Yet once more I shake not the earth only but the heavens."

The woodcutters imitated the Forester. Their axes were cutting into the bark of the oaks when a well supported fire proceeding from close at hand through the interstices of the palisade, killed and wounded some of the religionists.

The pioneers stayed one moment; the wounded and dead were carried to the bank of the river, under shelter of a row of willows which protected them from the fire.

"Strike, strike without ceasing at the gate of the temple, it will open," cried Ichabod, whom the sight of blood seemed to put beside himself, and snatching up an axe he attacked the palisade again. It happened that several shots went off at once without wounding him.

"The Lord is with us," cried Ephraim, "he protects him who hath his Word."

These words redoubled the ardour of the beseigers, despite the murderous fire which thinned their ranks, they worked madly at the destruction of the palisade, speaking only in a low voice, so as to lose not a single word of the prophet's words or Ephraim's commands.

This gloomy silence, interrupted only by the shots or the dull sound of axes and levers, was more appaling than the wildest cries of fury.

Two more Camisards had just fallen under the fire of the Miquelets when Ephraim exclaimed:

"Brethren! let some of us kneel down and try to sap that entrenchment; the shots of the Philistines will not be able to reach us. Our brethren will retire under the shelter of the willows, till the passage is forced."

The fanatics obeyed; Esprit Seguier, Icha-

bod and five or six Camisards armed with axes remained with the forester, and the palisade, thus attacked at its base, was vigorously shaken.

The embrasures in this work, which had been calculated at the height of a man, became now nearly useless; the Miquelets could hardly fire straight down upon the rebels kneeling at the foot of the fortification.

At last the latter, after incredible efforts, succeeded in making a passage for themselves. The trees fell with a crash in the midst of the frenzied cries of "Israel, Israel!" raised by the Camisards. With Ephraim at their head they immediately scaled the ruins of the palisade and threw themselves upon the bridge.

This bridge, twenty feet long by ten broad, was covered with rebels who were attacking the door of the Abbey which had been substantially barricaded within by the Miquelets who had just retired to the interior of the cloister.

Suddenly a bright light illuminated the battlements of the Abbey, the plain, the horizon, and the sky; a terrible explosion was heard, the waters of the Tarn recoiled, boiling to their banks. The Bridge, mined by the

orders of Paul, was sprung with a dreadful noise, killing and mutilating a number of the Camisards.

Unfortunately the concussion was so great that the heavy gate of the Abbey, shaken by this dreadful shock, fell towards the besiegers, carrying down with it those two panels of the old walls in which its hinges were fastened.

The explosion had rent the bridge in the midst of its arch; the Religionists, as soon as they had recovered their first terror, crossed this chasm which was about four feet broad, making use of the door which they threw to re-unite the two fragments of the arch; then they poured in crowds into the interior of the cloister.

To their great astonishment, the Camisards found the Court deserted.

The effect of this mine had been so terrible, that they feared for a moment a fresh explosion. They stopped in hesitation, interrogating with their looks Ephraim and the prophet.

The Forester, inaccessible to fear, cried out, "Brethren, on your knees! Let us thank the Lord for having blessed our arms."

"Brother," said Esprit Seguier to Ephraim, "why should we not kill the Philistines and

offer their blood to God? Suppose they escape us?"

"To leave the Abbey must they not cross this Court and bridge? Does not the deep and rapid river wash its battlements on every side? Is not the only boat which could aid their flight destroyed? Let us pray, let us pray brother. Let our resounding voices carry fear into the souls of these sons of Baal who are hidden and who tremble behind the walls of this new Babylon! Let our hymns be for them the thunder of the Last Trumpet! 'I will send a fire into the house of Hazael which shall devour the palaces of Benhadad. I will send a fire on the wall of Gaza, which shall devour the palaces thereof, saith the Lord."

"Fire!" cried Esprit Seguier with a savage joy; "yes, yes brother, let not a stone remain upon a stone in this modern Nineveh."

"And the crimson waters shall devour what the steel and the fire have spared," added Ephraim.

Then kneeling, he raised in a loud voice the psalm of deliverance, which the Camisards, kneeling like him, repeated together with a formidable voice.*

Note by the Translator. * The following extracts

from a curious work entitled "The Cry from the Desert or Testimonials of the Miracles lately come to pass in the Cevennes, verified upon oath," published by B. Bragge at the Black Raven in Paternoster Row, 1707, will serve as a striking illustration of the mode of warfare pursued by the more enthusiastic of the insurgents. "Were it that we were to attack the enemy? were we pursued by them? Did the night overtake us? were ambushes apprehended? Did some unlucky accident fall out? Were we at a loss for the place of religious assemblage? We fell on the knee. 'Lord appear to us. Help! make known to us thy good pleasure. What are we to do most for the glory and our own welfare?' And immediately we received a manifestation from the Spirit."

Declaration of Durand Fage. Cry &c. p. 70.

I rushed into the midst of the enemy as if their arms were made of paper and I was sheltered in steel, if the Spirit had strengthened me with those good words 'fear nothing my child, I will preserve and stand by thee.' By the encouragement of such happy words from the Spirit of God our boys of twelve years old laid about them on the right and left like valiant men. Those who had neither sword nor gun did wonders with the club, pitchfork or sling. The showers of musket balls whistled in our ears and went through our hats and sleeves without terror. If the Spirit had said, 'fear not!' a shower of bullets was all one as common hail.

Declaration of Durand Fage, ibid.

I am satisfied that as God suppressed when he pleased the power of flames and did other like

miracles amongst us, so he damped the force of musket balls that they sometimes dropped harmless, and as it were rebounded from them that God would be a shield to.

Declaration of Elias Marion. Cry, &c. p. 94.

CHAPTER XXVII.

THE SACRIFICE.

During the attack on the Abbey, the Archpriest had kept himself shut up within his cell kneeling in prayer.

A lamp cast its wavering light upon his marble forehead and his colourless cheeks while his deep sunk orbits and the other features of his emaciated countenance were lost in shade.

At the first sounds of the conflict he had fallen into his habitual and formidable anguish; he shuddered with fear as he recollected the implacable severity which he had always displayed. Of a courage too indomitable to fear the deadly vengeance of the Religionists, it was not martyrdom which he dreaded, but the hour of God's judgment.

Sometimes the ever repressed martial ardour

of his character carried him away against his will. He wished to share in the fight; he wished to take the cross in one hand, and the sword in the other and throw himself into the midst of the besiegers. But he soon reproached this warlike impulse to himself as a sacrilege and fell back into an abyss of doubts and terrors.

Suddenly the window of his cell was broken, Paul appeared at it; his beard and his moustache were black with powder; he wore a steel corslet over his buff coat, on his head was a steel cap with a neck piece of chain mail. In his hand he held a musket which was yet smoking.

"The raft is ready; come," said he in a low and hurried voice; "come quickly."

"You abandon the Abbey and the prisoners?" exclaimed the Archpriest indignantly.

"I have done all that a soldier could do, nothing more, nothing less. Come, come!" But seeing that the Abbé did not move, the Guerilla added: "Every second that you lose costs you a year of your existence. Yes or no, will you come?"

"I will never desert the souls whom it is my mission to snatch from heresy."

"You will be a soul yourself immediately if you do not come."

"I order you to remain and—"

"To the devil then! so much the worse for you," cried the chief of the Miquelets, and he disappeared.

Captain Paul was not of an age nor a character to exaggerate his duty as a soldier to enthusiasm and utter self-abnegation. An old mercenary soldier in every sense of the word, he bravely earned his pay by the exposure of himself and his company, but he never went beyond the limits of the possible and necessary. So long as there was any use in resistance, he had resisted the Camisards with skill and courage; but when the palisade and the Abbey gate had both been forced he had seen the impossibility of holding out any longer against such disparity of numbers. The night was now so dark that there was no fighting hand to hand. The cells separated from one another, could not be defended. Profiting by the disorder that the explosion of the mine had caused amidst the Camisards, he had prudently secured his retreat by carrying away his wounded, and by barricading a subterranean passage which ran between the court of the cloister and the outer

garden which was bathed by the river, in that spot very deep and rapid.

Knowing that the barricade would delay the Camisards sometime, Paul placed all his men on a large raft, constructed of planks, which had been made a few hours before the attack and was intended to secure his flight in case of defeat. The Arch-Priest having refused to accompany him, the Guerilla put off a little above one of the sudden windings of the Tarn; the current, by the angle which it formed with the curve of the river, impelled the raft to the opposite bank. Paul and his Miquelets gained the open country.

When the rebels had sung their psalm they held counsel for a moment. The profound silence which reigned in the Abbey disturbed them; they feared to fall into another ambuscade.

Ephraim was the first to perceive that the door of the subterranean passage was barricaded. After many trials, this issue was made practicable, the Camisards poured through it in crowds. Having reached the garden they went all over it without finding anything. The light which shone through the window of the Abbé's cell attracted their attention.

This window was nearly on a level with the ground. Ephraim approached it, saw the Arch-Priest, sprang up with a roar like a tiger's, and with one bound was in the apartment.

Ichabod and some Camisards had followed him. The forester, as if to vindicate his right to the life of the Arch-Priest put his broad hand upon the shoulder of the Abbé, and cried out with an accent of savage triumph and cruel derision, alluding to the flight of the Miquelets:

"Thy mighty men, O Theman, shall be dismayed, because there hath been a great slaughter upon the mountain of Esau."*

The Arch-Priest remained seated, resting his hands upon the arms of his chair. His bearing was as proud, as calm, as majestically imposing as if he were presiding, from the height of his abbatial seat, over his Chapter at Laval, in solemn conclave; he turned his head slowly, and without answering Ephraim, he fixed on him such a look of dignity, one so impressed with a fearless resignation that the forester cast down his eyes.

* Obadiah v. 9. French translation.

"Death, death to the son of Belial," cried the Camisards, rushing into the room.

"Brethren! justice shall be done; my vision must be fulfilled," said Ephraim, "but before all we must discover the soldiers who are perhaps laying some ambush for us, and deliver our brethren. The death of the Arch-Priest of Belial will be sweet to their eyes. Esprit-Seguier," added the Camisard addressing his lieutenant, "bind this Satan. I will return."

The search which Ephraim made was in vain. He did not discover the Miquelets. When he descended into the cellars to free the Protestant prisoners, some of them informed him that they had seen, through the air-holes in their vault, the soldiers embarking on the raft.

Reassured upon this point, Ephraim came up again, followed by the unfortunate victims whom the Arch-Priest kept in the *ceps*.

When they learnt that their persecutor was in the power of the rebels, nearly all raised cries of death and vengeance. Jerome Cavalier, some women and girls, and some Religionists as humane as the farmer, tried in vain to oppose the sanguinary projects of the majority; they were not listened to. Not wishing to be present at the dreadful scene

which was about to take place, they took refuge in one of the deserted cells.

The Arch-Priest, seated and bound down in his chair, was carried by two Cevennese into the middle of the court of the cloister.

Four pikes were fixed in the ground; to their poles were fastened four torches of resinous wood, which cast a red light upon this appalling picture. The arches of the cloister seemed dyed in blood, and stood forth against the black shadow of the corridors.

The stars were bright in the heavens; the distant murmur of the river was distinctly heard, for the Camisards preserved a savage, almost a solemn silence. They believed themselves about to witness the punishment of a criminal, not the murder of an innocent man.

On the right of the fettered Priest stood Ephraim leaning on his axe; on his left Ichabod, dressed in his red tunic, with his eyes raised to heaven, his arms crossed upon his breast, his whole frame shaken with a nervous trembling.

The Abbè cast around this menacing crowd, looks full of serenity; he hoped that his martyrdom might be accepted by God, as an ex-

piation of the too great severity which he had displayed.

"Brethren!" cried Ephraim, in a loud voice, "let those who have been dragged in the *ceps* take their places in the first rank, it belongs to them. Let those of the soldiers of the Eternal, who have suffered by the loss of those dear to them, take their places also in the first rank, it belongs to them."

The orders of Ephraim were executed with a funereal solemnity; the Keeper of Aygoal presided over the preparations of this bloody sacrifice with a frightful coolness and a lugubrious regularity: he might have been thought a Pontiff ordering a religious ceremony.

The Arch-Priest was surrounded by a close circle, composed of his most deadly enemies, who fixed upon him greedy looks of vengeance.

"Thou hast slain with the sword, thou shalt perish by the sword," said Ephraim to the Abbe du Chayla. "'For thy violence against thy brother Jacob, shame shall cover thee, and thou shalt be cut off for ever.'"*

"Brother," said the Abbé, "you profane

* Obadiah, v. 10.

the words of Scripture. Do not commit a new murder, a fresh sacrilege. Oh, it is not my life which I refuse; that belongs to God. It is your soul which I wish to save. Abjure your fatal heresy, return to the true Church. The clemency of God is inexhaustible. I tell you at this last hour, Abjure! abjure! you will be pardoned, my brethren. Do not lose your immortal souls."

The Abbé pronounced these words with a firm and sweet voice, with an accent filled with tender pity. The approach of death, the ineffable hope that his sufferings would be counted to his profit by the Divine mercy supported this inflexible soul. The sublime charity of Christianity made him feel for his executioners the most profound pity.

The incensed Camisards raised violent murmurs when they heard the Arch-Priest invite them to abjure their faith.

Ephraim raised his voice above those threatening murmurs, and cried aloud:

"Brethren, brethren, listen! The voice of the Lord is about to speak. Ichabod! Ichabod! what saith the Spirit?"

The boy pronounced, in an abrupt and

shrieking voice these verses of Scripture which could be applied to the Arch-Priest:

"'Thou shouldst not have looked on the day of thy brother in the day that he became a stranger; neither shouldst thou have rejoiced over the children of Judah in the day of their destruction; neither shouldst thou have spoken proudly in the day of distress.* Thou shalt be cut off for ever.'"

"Let him die! let him die!" cried the Camisards brandishing their arms.

Ichabod continued:

"'Neither shouldst thou have stood in the causeway, to cut off those that did escape, neither shouldst thou have delivered up those that did remain in the day of distress.† Thou shalt be cut off for ever!'"

Ichabod ceased and fell fainting and gasping at the feet of Ephraim.

"For the last time, brethren, abjure your damnable heresy!" cried the Arch-Priest. "Ah! would that my death, like that of the Saviour, could save you instead of losing your souls for ever. My brethren, there is yet time; abjure and return to the worship of the true God."

Notes * and † Obad. v. 12. 14.

At these words the fury of the Camisards reached its height; all the authority of Ephraim was needed to prevent their massacring the Arch-Priest at once.

"Brethren!" exclaimed the Forester, "blow for blow, blood for blood! Let those who weep for a relative killed by the Philistines be the first to strike this son of Baal. *Let every wound have a name!*"

This proposition was received with savage exultation. The Religionists who had to revenge the death of a relative advanced. A slow and funereal procession then commenced.

Ephraim gave the dagger to Esprit Seguier who was at the head of this lugubrious procession.

The lieutenant was the first to stab the Arch-Priest with a firm hand, saying to him:

"This is for my brother whom you caused to be massacred at the meeting at Alte Fage at the gate of Alais. Be thou accursed!"

And he handed the dagger to a Camisard, named Laporte.

The blow was not mortal. The Arch-Priest raised no cry, he lifted his eyes to heaven, and said in a loud and firm voice, with an expres-

sion of profound resignation, this verse of the Penitential Psalm:

> "*De profundis clamavi ad te Domine; Domine exaudi vocem meam.*"*

Laporte then advanced and struck the Arch-priest saying: "This is for my son, whom you broke alive upon the wheel at Montpellier. Be thou accursed!"

And he passed the poniard to Cadoine of Anduze.

The Abbe lost much blood by this second wound, he bowed his head upon his shoulder, and still possessed the courage to say in a suppliant and weak voice:

> "*Libera me de sanguinibus Deus, Deus salutis meæ, et exultabit lingua mea justitiam tuam.*"†

Cadoine of Anduze then stabbed the Arch-Priest, saying: "This is for my father, a minister of the Lord, whom you burnt at Nismes. Be thou accursed!"

† The following is a literal translation of the ejaculations of the Abbe, which are taken from the Vulgate translation of the Psalms.

"Out of the depths have I cried unto thee, O, Lord! Lord, hear my voice,

This last blow was mortal.

The Arch-Priest murmured these last words:

"*Miserere mei Deus . . . . secundum magnam . . . . misericordiam tuam.*"*

And he expired.

Notwithstanding his death, the murderous procession still continued.

All who had any wrongs to avenge upon the Arch-Priest, stabbed his body in the same solemn manner, and pronouncing the same words of reproach and malediction.

His body received fifty-two wounds, of which twenty-four were mortal. After this horrible execution, the Religionists led by Ephraim quitted the Abbey. They carried the body of the Arch-Priest to the quarter of the four roads.

He was then hung upon the Cross of Blood.

Thus was fulfilled the vision of Ephraim, who cried once more in a loud voice: "Thus shall perish the ravening wolves! Thus hath perished the Arch-Priest of Baal!"*

* "Free me from Blood, O God, God of my salvation! and my tongue shall extol thy justice.

* "Have mercy upon me, O Lord, according to thy great mercy.—Tr.

Nearly all the Huguenots who had shared in this murder, retired to the inaccessible mountains of the Cevennes under the guidance of Ephraim and organized themselves into bodies of Guerillas.

The civil war was now declared.

The murder of the Arch-Priest of the Cevennes by the followers of Ephraim, the extermination of the dragoons of Saint Sernin by those of Cavalier, such were the first and sanguinary defiances which the Camisards hurled to the royal and religious power of Louis the XIV.

The *Great King*, by the monstrous persecutions and the unheard of cruelties, which he had incessantly exercised upon the unfortunate Protestants of France, since the revocation of the Edict of Nantes, became responsible before God, and should be held responsible by history for the torrents of blood and the horrors without name, which filled all Europe with dismay during that terrific war.

THE END OF THE FIRST BOOK.

Note I. The account from which M. Sue has taken his narrative of the Abbé du Chayla will be found in the History of the Camisards, Book I. The following account by one of the principal actors

in those transactions of the liberation of the Protestant prisoners, at Pont de Mont-Vert and of the death of the Abbé du Chayla is taken from a work already cited in the Notes.

"On the 21st. July 1702, being a Lord's day, we were met together for divine worship near the mountain of Lozere. I was then taken with ecstasies and violent agitations and was commanded [by the Spirit] to take up arms forthwith and go to deliver our brethren who were imprisoned at Pont de Mont Vert. They were in the Castle or Mansion house of M. Dandry where lived then the Abbè of Chayla. Those who had received directions from the Spirit put their hands to the work. Esprit-Salomon, Soulages, Mazarine and some few more in great haste went, one this way, another that, to seek out assistants...— We met at the place of rendezvous next night, in all about forty men. We had no other arms than a few swords, some forks and old halberds, and perhaps twenty guns or pistols, but the God of arms was our strength. We went all to prayers; some were ordered by the Spirit to enter the village of Pont de Mont-Vert after it was dark, and singing psalms, to go direct to the castle, and deliver our brethren in spite of all the opposition of the Abbé of Chayla, the murderer of many poor innocents. We rescued the prisoners of whom Massyr of Cannes was one, who is at present with us here at Lausanne; we found him so fettered that he could neither lie down nor rise up. After this was

executed, we, by order [of the Spirit] asked to speak with the Abbé, but he fired at us, having some soldiers with him beside his familiars. His resistance signified little. The Castle was reduced to ashes after a miraculous manner. The man of blood attempting to save himself, flung himself from a great height, and, by a stroke of divine vengeance, put an end to his own *serpentine* life.

Declaration of Abraham Mazel. Cry from the Desert. p. 93.

THE END OF VOL. I.